

ICT, GLOBALISATION **&** **THE STUDY OF** **LANGUAGES** **&** **LINGUISTICS IN AFRICA**

Ozo-mekuri Ndimele (Ed.)



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ICT, Globalisation & the Study of Languages & Linguistics

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ICT, GLOBALISATION

&

The Study of Languages & Linguistics in Africa

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to

Dr. J.G. Ahukanna

(A Former indefatigable and dependable Treasurer of LAN)

Preface

This book contains twenty-one (21) papers selected from a pool of fifty-three (53) papers which were received for consideration. Due to space and financial limitations, some other good papers that also address the theme of this book project were dropped. The exercise was painstaking, and the final selection was based on the thorough and objective recommendations of our reviewers.

The majority of the papers that focus on the twin subjects of globalisation and information/communication technologies (CTs) expressed either fear or optimism regarding their effects on the survival of indigenous cultures, languages and literature. Some of the papers discussed the enormous benefits of ICTs in the study, development, documentation and archiving of indigenous languages of Africa, while others argued that globalisation portends great danger to cultural as well as linguistic diversity. In fact, the greatest worry is that many indigenous languages of Africa may die before the second half of this millennium due mainly to the negative impact of globalisation.

This book is a must read for anyone who is interested to learn more about the role of globalisation in the erosion of cultural as well as linguistic diversity, and the impact of ICTs in the development of indigenous languages in Africa.

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1. ICT, Globalization & the Future of Human Language

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Singly or in collocation, ICT (information and communications technologies) and Globalization are now clichés or buzz words. And so, sometimes, people do not realize that ICT and Globalization are different phenomena, each with its own history and its own trajectory. Both of them are now, however, linked by the vagaries of history and the imperatives of the new ‘consciousness industry’ with its multiplier effects in the post-industrial world driven by the economics of Paul Romer and others. Globalization as a phenomenon that distanciates or compresses time and space, is older than ICT. Osterhammal and Paterson (2003) trace its roots to the late 15th century Europe. ICT is relatively new having taken shape in the 1960s. Yet, both ICT and Globalization are now a fixed collocation. In a sense, Globalization is the vehicular process, and ICT, the dynamo that energizes that process. ICT has potentials for all disciplines under the sun. Globalization has implications for all sectors of international relationships from policy-making through the liberalization of ideas, practices, trade, finance and investment in material and non-material matters. Globalization, in theory and practice, is full of paradoxes. ICT, in theory and practice, is full of potentials. How are all these impacting on human language in all its widest ramification, now, and in the future?

Information & Communications Technologies

Some Preliminary Basics

This is, in fact, not one but many different but complementary technologies. They are all digital, and include fibre-optics, laser disc, packet switching, Direct Broadcast Satellite (DBS), Digital Satellite System (DSS), multimedia technology etc. In the holistic, hyper-sophisticated, post-analogue Hi-Tech Discourse, fathered, energized and propagated within the post-1969 information and communications technologies, there now is an industry referred to as the '*consciousness industry*' which produces knowledge capital. Formal education and mass media function here. This industry is propelled by ICT-based tools: electronics, computers, telecommunications, television, their component parts and the software that animate them. The hub, dynamo and catalyst of this industry is the *Internet*, the vast network of networks which connects countless computers all over the world through telephone lines.

The Internet

This is an intimidating network of networks where each computer can exchange information with every other computer that is connected, no matter its location in time or space. This system is not owned by anybody; it is not run by anybody. Most of its services are free.

The Internet has brought about an intimidating revolution and explosion in the storage, speed, exchange and dissemination of information on practically all subjects under the sun - initially, audio and later, video. The Internet, through the World Wide Web (www) created in 1989, now maintains and distributes multimedia documents which incorporate texts, pictures, audio and video. The www is only

the visual part of the Internet as well as the collection of linked pages of information filled with colourful graphics, texts, sounds, animation and advertisement from all over the world. These pages, which offer links to other pages with related information allow for 'jumping' around, can belong to associations, corporate organizations, government agencies or individuals. Each page consists of computer files which may include text, files, sound files and so on. Each group of pages belonging to a specific institution, individual or entity is called a Website. Travelling between these huge oceans of intimidating information is often called 'surfing the web'. Through the Web Browser it is now possible and easy for the personal computer to access the www without the user bothering about or even knowing the complications of the UNIX computer language.

Uses of the Internet

One very powerful capability and asset of the Internet is that it allows users to interact with each other and one another. Through its use, net users can exchange information on practically anything. Net users can leave messages with questions, requests or advice and can read everyone else's message. Again, users can, through 'real-time chat' 'speak' to other users who can read the message they are receiving as it is being typed by the sender. As it is, the Internet is an indispensable modern research resource. In fact, one of the resources of the web is that it is a Library of Standard Reference Materials and Classics. Put simply, the Internet is an international market place for buying and selling ideas, goods and services. It is an international notice board for the display of information of all sorts from Algebra to Zoology, and from Adelaide to Zurich.

The Virtual Library

This is one of the great services provided by the Internet. Through the Virtual Library (VL), the Internet is used and developed to:

- underpin learning and the acquisition of knowledge ,
- provide a more solid basis for education, and
- enhance quality of life by drawing on digitally available (preferably on line) books, materials and journals, via ICT-based tools.

A VL provides remote (online or CD-ROM-based) access to a variety of data of personal, national, and international nature (e.g. curricula, learning materials, books, journals, magazines, newspapers). These services are those traditionally offered by conventional libraries and other information sources. VLS are now able to combine on-site collections of materials in electronic format with an electronic network which ensures access to and delivery of those materials.

Among other things, a VL

- ensures the systematic development of the means to collect, store, and organize information and knowledge in digital form and provides easy and affordable access to it around the clock from various locations.
- provides ICT-based access to a range of digitally available publications for educational purposes available in the public domain and from other sources;
- provides access to distance education materials;
- contributes to the efficient delivery of information to students, researchers and teachers in the universities and educational institutions of higher learning;

- strengthens communication and collaboration between and among the researchers, library and educational communities, nationally, regionally and internationally;
- offers life-long learning opportunities.

Potentials of the Internet

So far only 10% of the Internet resources are tapped. If only some 10% of the total capacity of the Internet's resources are now being actually used and, it is that effective for the storage of information, retrieval, commerce, research, dissemination, entertainment etc., it is predicted that before the end of the first decade of the 21st century 'we will see'

- 10 times as many people on the Internet especially in the developing countries (As at June 13, 2002 these were 823, 774, 438 Internet users in the world);
- 100 times as much speed, as organizations begin investing in and improving on existing infrastructure;
- 1000 times as many devices connected to the Internet, and
- 1,000,000 more data on the Internet

The truth of the matter is that the more the Internet develops its communications' capabilities, the more these impact on consumer technology and on all facets of education and all aspects of life and living in the modern world. Given the awesome strides in ICT, especially the Internet, in the last 34 years, by the end of the 21st century, one would need a beatific or apocalyptic vision to conceptualize what the Internet would be used for! Just as one would, of the mobile phone which today is now being used as, a phone, a camera with zoom, video recorder, radio e-mail, notepad, web browser, calendar, photo album, bluetooth, all these in well over 65,000 colours!

And the Internet really has the potential and capacity for those and more.

Globalization

Some Preliminary Basics

The term, globalization and the process, globalization have become so lionized that obfuscation has inevitably set. In with regard to people now being sure of what globalizing is or means. Simply put:

Globalization is the ability of many people, ideas and technology to move from country to country. (Globalization) is not new. In Africa it was initiated by the slave trade and given impetus by colonialism and Christian Missionaries.

With this simple if not simplistic definition, let us now, from the huge and fascinating literature on globalization distill some of the more common features, of which some will be relevant to the future of human language.

- Historically, and as well put in Osterhammel and Paterson (2003), globalization is rooted in structures, processes and events that go back to the late 15th century Europe. This was the time when Europe set about subjugating the world with voyages of discovery, worldwide expeditions, punitive military raids, the establishment of world-wide trade links with 'New worlds', emigration and slave trade.
- It 'distanciates' and 'compresses' time-space and thus intensifies global interconnectedness and interdependence, making nonsense of personal, ethnic, national, international or regional boundaries, preferences and policies.

- It affects all areas, all aspects and all sectors of modern life and living from the most intimate, private, personal, sacred and exclusive to the most distant, open, non-personal, obscene and inclusive, ambitious, ubiquitous and ambiguous.
- It is a contingent and dialectical process which embodies contradictory dynamics and results in loud paradoxes:
 - universalisation and particulasation;
 - homogenization and differentiation;
 - intergration and fragmentation;
 - centralization and decentralization, and
 - juxtaposition and syncretisation.

It needs to be re-emphasized that whereas Globalization has not been fathered by ICT, ICT has valorized and synergized Globalization. The two of them have made phenomenal contributions to the conscious industry, in general, and the fortunes of human language, in particular. There now are some areas that learning and communication have benefitted or can benefit from ICT and Globalization. These include:

- The application of technology to basic skills
- Increased self-esteem and confidence on the part of learners, teachers and administrators
- With particular reference to the fortunes of human language, ICT and Globalization have enhanced research, development and overall conceptualization of human language.

ICT, Globalization & Human Language: Assets & Liabilities

Since the Industrial and Agricultural revolutions in the Western European world, the world has lionized, demonized and defied science and technology. In the developed, post-technology world where things connect so well unlike (elsewhere) where power outage is unimaginable and where all the gadgets that are powered by electricity and other forms of energy function to full capacity and with clockwork precision, science has become god, technology its religion, and Internet its theology. Every product of Hi-Tech has its own different but complementary trajectory with the other products, in the magnified cyber sophisticated and exulted litany of S and T. The Information Super Highway, the World Wide Web, created, sustained and complemented by a multiplicity of other Hi-Tech forces, provide through Internet, e-mail, e-education, e-economy, e-business, e-banking, video-mail, cordless ITT, among others, has produced by way of a melt-down, today's ICT megapolis found in the global melting-pot now metaphorically called, the *global village*. Or is it a global hamlet? For isn't this, better described as a micro-macroscopic global tapestry montagne? Actually, this is the true picture of what we get from watching CNN or browsing the Internet.

In the light of the knowledge available about the Internet on the sociology and psychology of knowledge and their overall effects on modern online man, the following deductions can be made on their multiplier contributions to language, as the most sophisticated means of human communication. These include:

- The enthronement of the English Language as the world's language with its many national and regional varieties as the world's language of widest communication.
- The evolution and empowerment of fewer Languages of Wider Communication, (LWCs), Official Languages (OLs) and International or World Languages (WLs), as the Internet language(s).
- The phenomenon of language death and, paradoxically, the rise and empowerment of ethnic and national languages, including mother tongues (MTs) and languages of the Immediate Community (LICs) in the spirit of the *Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights* (1996).
- Research and development in all areas of language studies.
- The dislocation and oversimplification of written language as a medium of communication.

Let's now take up some of these points and develop them.

i. **The Enthronement of the English as the World Language**

- The PC business was born in the US. So, too, the Internet. A lot of the digital discourse (e-mail, video-mail and commerce (e-commerce, e-business, e-banking)) across the Internet is initially carried out in English. The information supporting the super highway uses mainly English. Thus, by 2001, Grandal (2001:1) had observed that English had been enthroned as the language of the Internet.

The Internet will remain disproportionately in English and will, over time, cause more people to learn the English language and this will solidify English as a global language.

- Today some 380 million people speak English as their primary language and more than 250 as a second language. English dominates international diplomacy and business and is the language used on 52% of all websites.
- In 2000, some ten predictions were made about the future of ICT and human behaviour. Following but modifying Okwudishu and Okwudishu (in this volume), 'three are of particular interest' in this work.
- The Internet will change from being exclusive to English as a medium of mass communication. Cyberfaces are doing this all over the world. Beside, the cost of setting up a functional private ICT outfit is going down by the day.
- By the year 2005, some 700 million non-English speakers will come online. This will include more than 500 million people in the Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs) in China, Thailand, S Korea, Malaysia and Singapore, whose transactions are mostly carried out in their own indigenous languages.
- Deriving from the above is that the dominant position of English as the language of the Internet will be grossly affected, falling as the prediction goes, from 80% in 2001 to 41% in 2005.

Two deductions will be made from the above:

- Diglossia with people using their own native language for local and regional communications and commerce and English for most International transactions on the Web.
- Empowerment of a number of languages of wider communication (LWCs), International or World Languages (WLs) or Official languages (OLs) as Internet Languages.

ii. Language Endangerment and Empowerment

As fewer and fewer LWCs, and WLs languages struggle to join English in the league of the Internet languages, the issue of language endangerment the world over, becomes more glaring, more alarming and more problematic. Even before, and without the Internet, sociolinguists had come to the 'conclusion' that only about 10% of today's 6,528 languages of the world spoken by some 6.5 billion people would survive into the 21st Century. And with the Internet, globalization, mass culture and English, as the language of the Internet and world culture, confusion is now becoming roughly organized for all world languages, especially those variously, identified as *Endangered*, *Moribund*, *Dying*, *Deprived*, or even *Dead*.

iii. Language Enrichment

One of the great facts of human language is its ability to expand its lexicon to cope with new realities in time and space. Computer-mediated communication (CMC) is one of the firm relations of using the resources of ICT in global communication. With e-mail, text messaging, online chats, listservers, bulletin boards, web pages, audio and video conferencing, among others, electronic discourse is now a live feature of human language. The Internet now has its own language which has been various described as *cyberspace communication*, *netspeak*, or *netlinguistics* or computer mediated communication. CMC is characterized by:

- extensive abbreviations;
- old (English) words with extended semantic fields, and
- brand new words with their distinct meanings.

Taiwo (2004) contains four illuminating lists in tables, which we shall hereunder reproduce. We have, however, put the items on the tables in alphabetic order for ease of reference

Table 1: Categories of Linguistic Forms in SMS Messages

<i>S/No</i>	<i>Categories</i>	<i>Examples</i>
1	Acronyms	lol – lots of love tb - text back wbs – write back soon fyi - for your information
2	Americanized Forms	Cos/coz- because wanna - want to Bout - about ya - you
3	Consonant Clusters	tkz/tks- thanks msg – message txt – text chn – children wknd – weekend frm – from blsd – blessed abt - about
4	G-Clipping	fightin – fighting comin – coming morning – morning leavin – leaving
5	Letter Homophones	d - the b – be y - why c – see u – you
6	Letter/ Number Homophones	m8 – mate 4wd – forward b4 - before gr8 – great 9it – night
7	Non- Conventional Spellings	luv – love fone – phone gud – good wen – when kul – cool
8	Number Homophones	4 – for 1 – one 2 – two 8 – ate
9	Shortening	Mon – Monday poss – possible Movt – movement bro – brother Eng – English Morn – morning com – Communication

Table 2: *Old Words for New Linguistic Expressions in the Cyberspace and Internet*

<i>Expression</i>	<i>The General Basic Meaning</i>	<i>The New Meaning</i>
Attachment	A document that you connect to another, e.g., a piece of paper or a machine	A document that is sent with an e-mail message
Browse	To look through pages of a book, any magazine, etc. without a particular purpose, just reading the interesting parts	To search computer materials
Chat	To talk in a friendly informal manner	To communicate with several people in a chatroom on the internet
Compose	To write a letter, special poem or music	To write a text message or e-mail message
File	A box or folded piece of paper that is used to store papers in the proper order	A collection of information on a computer that is stored under a particular name
Flash	To shine suddenly and brightly for a short time	To call somebody on a mobile phone without the intention of talking to the person
Junk	Old, unwanted	(Junk mail) unsolicited

	objects that have no use or value	mails sent by advertisers
Menu	A list of the kinds of food that are available for a meal especially at a restaurant	A list of things that you can choose from or ask a computer to do
Mouse	An animal like a small rat	A small device connected to a computer by wire which is used to give command
Notebook	A book made of plain paper on which you can write notes	A very small personal computer that is the size of a notebook
Page	One side of a sheet of paper in a book or newspaper	All the texts that can be seen at one time on a computer screen
Password	A secret word or phrase that someone has to speak before they are allowed to enter a place such as a military camp	A secret group of letters or numbers that must be put into a computer before you can use a system or programme
Save	To keep money or something else so that you can use later	To make a computer to keep the work that you have done on it
Surf	To ride on waves, standing on a special board	(Surf the net) to look quickly through information on the computer for anything

		that interests you
Virus	Very small living thing smaller than bacteria that causes infection	A set of instructions secretly put in a computer that can destroy the information stored in the computer

There are also linguistic expressions, which though entirely new in the language, are now gaining acceptance among users of the language. They are presented in Table 3 below:

Table 3: *New Linguistic Expressions in Cyberspace and Internet*

<i>S/No</i>	<i>Expression</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
1	Cybercafe	A café that has computers which are connected to the internet for customers to use
2	Cyberland	Activities that involve computer and those who use it
3	Download	To move information from one part of the computer to another.
4	Emoticon	One of the set of special words commonly used to show an emotion in e-mail and on the internet, often by making picture
5	Keypal	Somebody with whom you regularly exchange e-mail
6	Netiquette	The commonly accepted rules for polite behaviour when communicating with other people on the internet

7	Netspeak	The expression, technical words commonly used on the internet
8	Pay-as-you-go	The mobile phones or internet service in which you pay before you use the services
9	Pincode	A secret number used by a cell phone user to gain access to it
10	Spam	Unsolicited mail, eg. Adverts
11	Texter	Somebody who sends text message
12	Teximate	Somebody who you normally send texts to

Source: Taiwo (2004)

The last group of linguistic expressions are the new acronyms used in CMC. Just like the Expressions in Table 3, they are fast becoming widely accepted and used. These are presented in Table 4 below:

Table 4: *New Acronyms in Cyberspace and Internet*

<i>Acronyms</i>	<i>Full Forms</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
DVD	Digital Video (Versatile) Disk	A type of compact disk that can have information, sound and pictures on it
EFT	Electronic Fund Transfer	The process by which money is moved from one bank account to another.
GPRS	General Pocket Radio Service	A new non-voice service that allows information to be sent and received across a mobile

		telephone network.
MPEG	Motion Picture Expert Group	A way in which sound video material can be represented on the internet.
OCR	Optical Character Recognition	Computer software that recognizes letters of the alphabet so that you can put paper documents, into a computer
PCS	Personal Communications Service	A communication system that allows mobile phones to communicate with each other.
PDF	Portable Document Format	A way of storing computer files so that they can be easily read when they are moved from one computer to another
PIN	Personal Identification Number	A set of security numbers that mobile phone users use to protect their SIM against unauthorized use.
PUK	Pin Unblocking Key	A set of security numbers used to unlock a disabled PIN.
RTF	Rich Text Format	A system used to arrange and show the information in computer
SIM	Subscriber Identification Module	A card that fits into a small slot on the back of the phone containing a chip with all the

		information required operating the phone.
SMS	Short messages service/system	A feature on a mobile phone that allows a user to send or receive written messages.
URL	Uniform Resource Location	A description of where a particular computer field can be found especially on the Internet. Internet URLs usually begin with http://
WAB	Wireless Application Browser	A device attached to mobile phones to allow users access and navigate the wireless web through the phone.

Source: Taiwo (2004)

A close look at the structure and semantics of CMC reveals some paradigms that are evolving in the manner of slang and colloquialisms with definitive registers. The evolutionary trends in linguistic growth and maturation in pidginization and creolisation are also taking place. These are now posing great challenges to English, among the Internet Languages. While responses to these challenges vary with people, language learners and educators are clearly not comfortable with the invasion of formal (language) education by the language of CMC. Many researchers have drawn attention to how the breezy, abbreviated language of Internet chat rooms and instant messaging is invading high school English classrooms. Some educators believe that the new technologies are influencing not just the way their students write, but also the way they think and speak. Students have adopted, as

norms, the new language of English abbreviations, acronyms, emoticons, avatars, semantic and grammatical deviations regularly used to speed up conversation, when chatting online or when sending notes by cellphones. This hybrid of written words and abbreviations is showing up in homework assignments and undergraduate essays. This is clearly a serious problem for and in the use of human language and in language education! Should the use of these abbreviations be tolerated in oracy, literacy and written texts?

Secondly, changes have been noticed in interpersonal and even formal communication patterns because of the Internet. For example in day-to-day conversation, new idioms, slang and colloquialisms have developed from ICT. These include:

- Y2k compliance –being up-to-date
- Turn to download-turn latter
- Needing more bandwidth to handle the issue –can't take it all alone
- Multitasking – doing two or more things at the same time
- Getting offline for a few minutes-going into private session
- Living in hypertext-having something to hide.

ICT Research, and the Teaching of the Sound System and Language Skills

The acquisition of language skills is one of the most complex and more mysterious things in the human essence. It has been observed that children as young as 3 years of age already possess a remarkable knowledge of language structure and syntax which is so complex and precise that it can challenge any learning theory to account for its acquisition. If the situation is so with MT or L₁ or LOE or LIC, then with L₂, L₃

and Ln, the situation must be more intriguing for any learning theory. But be that as it may, ICT has a lot to contribute to the enhancement of education and information through:

- Its capability to acquire, for keeps and for use, the most up-to-date texts for the conventional library;
- Its VL resources for hardware, software and courseware, and
- Its use of ICT-based tools as effective instruments of education via audio visuals, hypermedia, interactive, adaptive, and discursive media processes.

In specific terms, the teaching and learning of the audio-aural skills (listening, understanding and reading) can now be better enhanced by digital laboratories, in-situ or by Distance Education (DE) for both small and large classes, within and outside formal classrooms. In fact, today, computers interconnected by telecommunications are very effective when education becomes independent of the location of the learners. For, with these devices, learning can now take place in the office or home rather than in the classroom. In fact, in the US, today, universities have interactive telecommunications' facilities that provide instruction from central locations to distance telecampuses, which could be office buildings or private learning centres, including homes. Phonetic and phonological features involving primary, secondary, and double articulation, phonation types, nasalization, aspiration, breathy voice, etc., rhyme and stress, tone and intonation, minimal pairs, and phonological look-alikes, syllable-timing, stress-timing, vowel features (assimilation, deletion, length), downstep, downdrift, updrift, are better processed, appreciated, experienced, taught, learnt and illustrated by

ICT-based tools in phonetic and language laboratories which now can be both classrooms and offices. As pointed out in Emenanjo (2002), 'The huge, immobile language laboratories are now being replaced by more compact, mobile, collapsible ones. The many cumbersome and, sometimes, not very comfortable equipment used in the large (and stuffy) phonetic laboratories of old for analysis and teaching have now been replaced by sophisticated micro PCs as sound and word processors. Such that a whole modern phonetics laboratory, like that in the Department of Linguistics University of Uyo, is accommodated on two tables in the office of the Head of the Department as against the basement-based one at the Old Faculty of Arts building which housed the Phonetics Laboratory in the 1960s and 1970s at the University of Ibadan

There is no doubt that research in the sound systems of languages and the teaching and learning of all the language skills stand to gain geometrically from practices and trends put together by ICT based tools, moreso with:

- The variety of programmes, especially multimedia available in CD ROM formats, and more recently OROMs
- Reduction in the cost of CD hardware
- Increase in the sale of CD software
- Increase in sophistication of courseware
- Increase in the speed of PCs
- Availability of fast microprocessors
- Development of digital VCDs that could contain more than 15 times the information held by current double-sided CDs that are re-recordable.
- Computers with optimal information storage facilities based on laserdisc technology which make it possible for

the entire *Encyclopedia Britannica* to be now available on a disc 11.4cm (4 1/2") in diameter.

Just as all facets in teaching and learning have gained and will continue to gain from ICT, so too the modern language researcher, teacher, educator and educationist, to be state-of-the-art, effective and efficient, must be:

- Fully computer literate and numerate
- Well equipped, professionally trained, cognitively and otherwise
- Fully trained to use effectively ICT-based tools of modern educational technology
- Knowledgeable in all language research, learning and teaching methodologies but eclectic in their use depending on variables like state or status of learners, content, environment.

ICT, Globalisation and the Imperative of Egalitarian Multilingualism

In spite of, or perhaps, even with ICT, the modern global world is one of paradoxes: globalization co-existing with insularity, unification (EU, the Germanies) co-existing with dismemberment: (USSR, Czech Republic, etc.) enthronement of world capitalism and the demise of world socialism and communism; world mass culture co-existing with small ethnic cultures, and few LWCs co-existing with vibrant, plural, ethnic languages - most of them in dire need of attention to be developed, revitalized and empowered!

Universal Declarations on:

- Human Rights (1948)
- The Rights of Persons Belonging to National, Ethnic and Linguistic
- Minorities (1992)
- Linguistic Rights (1996)
- Cultural Diversity (2002)

emphasize that multinationalism and multiculturalism must now co-exist with ethnic nationalism and ethnic culturalism, and unity with diversity. At the linguistic level, multilingualism and pluralism now co-exist with monolingualism through the empowerment of ethnic languages. The situation today is that practically all countries are multilingual, and multilingualism and polyglotism are great assets.

Linguistic marginalisation is no longer necessary or possible because in the spirit of the UN Declarations listed above:

- Linguistic Rights are human rights.
- People are entitled to the right to be educated in their own languages.
- People are entitled to the right for their own languages and cultures to be taught in their own languages.

The principle of egalitarian multilingualism which should now be the guiding principle in the language and literacy policies of all nations should assure that all national languages whatever their sociolinguistic vitality, whether official, or non-official; small group, medium or large group; majority, major or minor, should enjoy official recognition for use according to domains relevant to them; and for development for use as

instruments of literacy and education and so, be saved from endangerment and language death. The tensions between language death and language revitalization, on the one hand, and monolingualism and egalitarian multilingualism, on the other, can be seen in Leena et al. (2003) and Skutnabb-Kangas (2000 and 2003).

ICT and Linguistic Research

We have earlier observed that the Internet is an indispensable modern research resource, the web a library of standard reference materials and classics and the Virtual Library (VL) one of the great services provided for research purposes. Urua (2004) is a diagnostic example of the use of ICT in Linguistic Research. The Internet however has thousands of websites which contain Definitive Linguistic resources. These include:

- **www.linguisticlist.org**

This is the foremost website for linguistics ‘dedicated to providing information on language and language analysis and providing the discipline of linguistics with the infrastructure necessary to function in the digital world’.

- **[www.rosetta project.org](http://www.rosetta-project.org)**

This is dedicated to the Rosetta Project, on language shift, language endangerment and related issues

- **www.sil.org**

This website which is dedicated to IPA fonts and other language specific fonts has been developed by the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

- Countless linguistic resources can be found in the Internet on Software, Bibliographies, Dictionaries and on numberless world languages with their dedicated websites.
- Afri Nic (African Network Information Centre) is working with Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN @ Large) to endorse African Languages and Cultures for the Internet.

With particular reference to language research in Africa, the following are available:

- Matthias Brenzinger@uni-koeln.d for Endangered and Marginalized languages in Africa.
- Software and Translators
- The Translation Project for Volunteers Worldwide has:
<http://www.iro.unmontreal.co/translation/>
- The Open Swahili Localization Project:
<http://www.kili.nux.org/kiblog/index.html>.
- Information to reduce the barriers for new translators and teams information on other projects have:
<http://translate.sourceforge.net/> including the Igbo open source translation project: <http://igbo.sourceforge.net/>.

Conclusion

What is the future of ICT? What is the future of Globalization? What is the future of these twin phenomena on human language? And what is the future of human language in a digitalized and globalized world?

Cybernetics (the combination of information and communications technologies) is the present day, third-wave successor of the agricultural (first-wave), and industrial (second-wave) revolutions. In spite of the 'awesome' strides that ICT has made, it is held that in the entire world only 10% of its resources are yet being tapped with Europe and N. America having 1:6 persons and Africa (less S. Africa) having 1:5000 persons using the Internet. Between them, ICT and Globalization have affected in a quantum manner and with geometrical progression market forces, decline in trade barriers, cost and environmental factors, technological change, improved communications, the deification of individualism, consumerism, the media and the unfettered and global spread of English. In August 1999, the *National Geographic* dedicated its special issue to global culture. In that study, it was observed that there is no better measure of this crises than the loss of languages. Over 10, 000 spoken languages have exited through history and only some 6,000 remain. Of these, 5 are the largest: Mandarin Chinese, English, Hindi, Spanish and Russian spoken by 45% of the world population, while 300 of the world languages are spoken by less than a million people. 95% of the world population speak only 100 languages while the remaining 5% speak some 5, 900 languages. With ICT and Globalization, English is now the planet's language of business, technology and, increasingly, empowerment. Non-native speakers of English now outnumber native speakers 3 to 1. More people are speaking English as a second than as a first language. In Asia alone, the number of English users has topped 350m roughly the combined populations of the US, Britain and Canada. There are more Chinese children studying English - about 100m - than there are Britons. About 350m people speak English as their primary language and

more than 250m as a second language as against 113m and over 60m respectively for French. France's annual \$1b budget to promote French internationally ranks 11th in terms of speakers. And this is still flagging 'though it is still the primary language in international institutions like UNESCO, Interpol, and the European Court of Justice and a working language at some others. English dominates international diplomacy and business and is the language used on 52% of all websites; just 4.6% are used in French. Across the E.U. (and excluding the UK) 92% of the students choose to study English as a foreign language compared to 33% for French and 13% for German. Even French multinationals like Alstan and Vivendi have adopted English as the workplace language. 80% of the electronically stored information in the world is in English; 66% of the world's scientists read in it and most computer books are in English. With English as the turbine engine of globalization and the language of most of ICT, it is estimated that within a decade 2 billion people will be studying English and about half the world, some 3 billion, will be speaking it. The ascendancy and primacy of English as the global language will certainly trigger off strong language shift from small, local, national, regional and even international languages (such as French) to English now the international predator language. African languages and Africans are really in grave danger with the scenario painted above. Worse still with the following facts:

- The digital divide
- Very poor and rudimentary telecommunication infrastructure
- Cost and financing of ICT facilities
- Epileptic if not non-existent power supply.

Add these discomforting and distressing statistics provided by the UNDP in 2001, for Africa's 816m people:

- 1 in 4 has a radio (i.e. 205m)
- 1 in 13 has a TV (i.e. 62m)
- 1 in 35 has a mobile phone (we 24m)
- 1 in 40 has a fixed phone (i.e. 20m)
- 1 in 130 has a Pc (i.e. 5.9m)
- 1 in 160 use the Internet (i.e. 5m)
- 1 in 400 has pay TV (i.e. 2m).

As long as this planet remains in its orbit, human language has a future and relevance. But the number of languages which will survive language shift, language death and language extinction will depend on a number of variables. These include:

- effective, pragmatic and implementable local, national and regional language and literacy policies which emphasize egalitarian multilingualism,
- balanced multilingual and multicultural language and literacy policies with specific domains
 - * for specific and properly delimited languages;
 - * for all levels of formal education initial literacy, basic literacy, post-basic and functional literacy;
 - * for adult literacy, non-formal literacy and further education.
 - * for everybody, every language group no matter the numerical size of its speakers, normal, handicapped and gifted persons in spite all discernible diversities in the cultures that make up the polity.

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2. Integrating ICTs into the Teaching & Learning of Nigerian Languages

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The infusion of technology into the teaching and learning of languages has become an urgent need in this new information era. Several workshops at the most recent West African Linguistic Congress reechoed this need and created awareness of the basic fact that the ability to use technological tools to assimilate new information will to a large extent determine how successful and effective teachers and learners will be. The field of language teaching is not left out. The purpose of this paper is to discuss how the teaching and learning of Nigerian languages can be enhanced through the infusion of ICT into the teaching/learning process.

Background

In most of the developed countries, the trend is towards the standardization and nominalization of information technologies with specific linguistic implications. These implications touch on the need for respect for and the promotion of linguistic diversity in technology and information highways. In the case of Canada, for example, specialists have analyzed the situation of the French language and have proposed several recommendations regarding strategies governing the making of *de jure* and *de facto* standards and initiatives aimed at promotion, awareness, and monitoring (Chaudiron and Clontier, UD). Thus, for a language like French in Canada, the problem in the era of

information technology is clear, visible and simple. All that language planners need to do is to ensure that the status of French, which is one of the three official languages of Canada, is bolstered as a common language in standardization agencies, as the language in which standards are written, and as a working language.

In developing nations, the situation is different mainly because of the complex multilingual status of most of the countries. While countries like Canada have defined priority areas, such as information coding, markup and tagging, user-machine access interfaces, ordering information as in alphabetical sorting, localization and internationalization of software, including transliteration, and coding of linguistic resources, their counterparts in the third world are living with the grim reality that the orthographies of their languages are yet to be developed. Of the 400 – 455 Nigerian languages (Bamgbose, 1991; ELR, 2002), fewer than 50 have orthographies and even then, standardization has progressed at snail speed. Only three of these numerous languages can boast of standardized orthographies. The question that arises is: How feasible is it for Nigerian languages most of which do not have standard orthographies to benefit from the opportunities offered by the new technologies in an information and knowledge driven economy?

Another area of concern is the neglect of using Nigerian languages as media for instruction and the lukewarm attitude toward learning them as L₂. This problem is closely linked with the former in the sense that without a standard orthography, it is difficult to produce the instructional materials required for the effective use of the local languages as media of instruction and for learning them as L₂. Faced with this reality one cannot help but wonder if it is not out of

place to talk about integrating ICT into the teaching and learning of Nigerian languages. In this paper, we will assume a contrary posture and argue that the time has come to refocus attention on the effective teaching and learning of Nigerian languages and that integration of ICT is not only possible but a must if the speakers of Nigerian languages are to get their own share of the limitless opportunities offered by the Internet and the other new technologies; that is, if they are to be players in the knowledge- based post- industrial era.

Theoretical Framework

Research in language education has shown that given the opportunity, all children can benefit from learning another language, that all children are capable of doing so, that students develop communicative competency in a second language in much the same way as in their first language, although the rate of acquisition will vary, and that students acquire language when the language is meaningful and interesting and when they are in a non-threatening environment (North Carolina Department of Public Education,2004).

The NCDPE (2004) stresses the value of learning another language (or other languages) when it points out that by learning another language students gain access to the different culture or cultures associated with that language, learn the ways of life and accomplishments of each culture, and as a result of this exposure they become more reflective about their own culture. The Standards for Foreign Language Learning (SFFLL) (2004) points out how connecting the second language curriculum to other disciplines can give added relevancy to the study of languages by bringing new insights into the rest of the curriculum:

To study another language and culture increases enormously one's ability to see connections. Since the content of a [second] language course deals with history, geography, social studies, science, math, and the fine arts, it is easy for students to develop an interdisciplinary perspective at the same time they are gaining intercultural understandings (SFFLL, p. 12).

The goal of learning a second language is to help the learner to develop the ability to communicate with speakers of the second language. In order to achieve this goal, the learner needs to use the language in a variety of real-life, meaningful and culturally accurate situations designed to promote relevant communication (NCDPE, op. cit.). However, in a second language teaching and learning situation, it is practically impossible to replicate all real-life, meaningful and culturally accurate situations in which the learners are likely to use the language in their everyday life and activities. Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) provide opportunities and possibilities for simulating accurate second language teaching and learning contexts.

What are ICTs?

The term "information and communication technologies" (ICTs) refers to a broad range of activities and equipment including all the tools, applications and information that are available and accessible via computers. Information technology in its fully convergent form encompasses various forms of information delivery system such as televisions, radios, newspapers, books, computers, Internet, etc, in one integrated environment (Shri Pramod Manajan, 2002).

Educational systems all over the world are under increasing pressure to use the new information and communication technologies (ICTs) to teach students the knowledge and skills they need in the 21st century. (UNESCO, 2002). The UNESCO World Education Report (1998) describes the radical implications the new information and communication technologies have for conventional teaching and learning and predicts a transformation of the teaching/learning process and the way teachers and learners gain access to knowledge and information.

In the developed world, the role of technology as a resource for teaching and learning of second languages is increasing as educators recognize its ability to create both independent and collaborative learning environments in which students can learn the new language (Butler-Pascoe, 1997) Butler-Pascoe draws attention to the salient characteristics and benefits of a technology-enriched curriculum for second language learners that underscore the central role technology can play in second language teaching and learning. Because computers utilize a multi-sensory collection of text, sound, pictures, video, animation and hypermedia, it can be used to provide meaningful contexts to facilitate comprehension. She argues that technology can provide students with language experiences as they move through the various stages of language acquisition; it can be used to support the writing process approach, and it can be used for drill and practice designed to reinforce class instruction. She points to the limitless opportunities provided by on-line databases for students to have access to authentic audiences and allow second language learners to compare the voice patterns of their speech with that of a native speaker. This is akin to computer-based immersion method, which is

based on the theory that language is best mastered when the learner is surrounded by only native speakers (UNESCO, 2002). The immersion method simulates a second language environment by elements such as placing the students in situations which they find interesting, providing linguistic commentaries, checking and testing students' progress and providing automated recognition of learners' speech.

In recent years, especially in the technologically developed world, there has been an explosion of interest in using computers for language teaching and learning (Warschauer & Healey, 1998). Warschauer and Healey identify three main stages in the 30 + - year history of computer- assisted language learning (CALL). These are behaviouristic CALL, communicative CALL and integrative CALL. Behaviouristic CALL, according to Warschauer, was characterized by repetitive language drills, referred to as drill - and - practice. In this mode, "the computer was viewed as a mechanical tutor which never grew tired or judgmental and allowed students to work at an individual pace". Communicative CALL emerged in the late 1940s and early 1980s. Proponents of this mode stressed "that computer - based activities should focus more on using forms than on the forms themselves, teach grammar implicitly rather than explicitly, allow and encourage students to generate original utterances rather than just manipulate prefabricated language and use the target language predominantly or even exclusively". Proponents of integrative CALL stressed the need for a shift from a cognitive view of communicative teaching to a more "social or socio-cognitive view, and placing greater emphasis on language being used in authentic social contexts. The integrative mode was characterized by task-based, project-based, and content-based approaches all of which "sought to integrate learners in

authentic environments, and also to integrate the various skills [of listening, speaking, reading and writing] and also integrate technology more fully into the language learning process". Warshauer predicts that future developments in networked communication, multimedia, and artificial intelligence will likely converge and that convergence will create a "more central role for the computer as a tool for authentic language exploration and use in the second language classroom", and only then will the computer technology take its rightful place as an important element of language learning and teaching.

Blake (2004) believes that increasing contact with the target language is one of the most critical factors for successful second language learning. In the absence of going to the region(s) where the target language is spoken and immersing oneself in the society and culture, technology, if wisely used, can play a major role in enhancing all L₂ learners' contact with the target language. He believes that computer technology will remain a key component to almost everything we do in the 21st century, and advises language professionals "to capitalize on its advantages and strengths wherever consistent with best teaching practices," noting that "language teachers who wish to remain competitive in the profession should observe and contemplate instances where technology can assist good teaching practices; today's language professionals must educate themselves to adapt these techniques to the needs of their own respective classrooms.

According to Braid (1998), a basic concept, which should guide future developments in the use of information technology is the individual's right to information. This right, further operationalized in the concepts of freedom of expression for all and access to information and the new

technologies of information, is supported by the UNESCO mandate, which focuses on the “maintenance of cultural and linguistic diversity”. This is the global linguistic goal for the 21st century. The promotion of this goal and the larger vision of universalization of human rights and democracy depend to a large extent on developments in multilingualism and the digitization of languages. Multilingualism, according to Irmay (1998), does not cover only linguistic issues but also other socio-cultural aspects of human life. In view of the above observation, digitization of languages will therefore focus not only on the development of the language for Internet, but also cultural issues that touch on language and its propagation over the new technologies on one hand, and the use of the new technologies for the propagation of languages on the other hand.

Kalgren (1998) observes that information technology must first of all show sensitivity to multilingual issues and build systems that support local needs. In the Nigerian context, one vital local need is that of teaching/ learning of Nigerian languages in schools as well as their use as languages of instruction. The role of information technology in satisfying this need cannot be overemphasized as it can provide the tool that could be effectively integrated into the language teaching/learning experience.

Writing on technology- enhanced pedagogy, Warschauer (2002) warns that in order to obtain a holistic view of the issues at stake the focus should move from the role of information technology in language teaching to the role of language teaching in the information technology society.

The Changing Context of Language Teaching

In order to appreciate the problem facing the teaching of Nigerian languages, it is important to reflect on the progress made in the teaching of languages like English. There is an increasing demand for the learning of English language all over the world because of the opportunity it offers speakers to communicate globally and to access international media. For example, more and more people use e-mail for both personal and official communication. This, according to Warschauer (op cit.), necessitates a rethinking of the relationship of ICT (computers and the Internet) to English language teaching. While just a decade ago it was fashionable to view the computer as a tool, a means (not an end) for learning English, now the scenario has changed. Language teaching is now seen as a tool, a means of helping people learn to write e-mail and use the Internet.

Turning attention to Nigerian languages, it is true that because of certain limitations many of these languages cannot be used to write e-mail. However, there are other aspects of ICT that Nigerian language speakers are exploiting. Think of what is going on right now with the cell phone, which is currently, surpassing face- to- face and telephone communication. Improved connectivity is now making it possible for Nigerians in very remote areas to communicate in their local languages with their friends, with their kith and kin and with their business partners. The teaching of Nigerian languages should therefore capitalize on this new development since text messaging is a very important skill associated with the use of cell phones. Thus, a good beginning in ICT integration would be to teach Nigerian languages using cell phones to help Nigerian children learn how to write text messages. The cell phone thus used offers the learners the

opportunity to link oral communication with written communication, thus improving both their speaking, writing and reading skills in the local language. From this humble beginning and with recorded progress, computers could be introduced later with a view to teaching these children how to feed similar information used as text messages into the computer. When this is mastered, they could then be taken a step further and be introduced to the Internet.

The Benefits of Integrating ICT into the Teaching and Learning of Nigerian languages

According to Egbokhare (2003), the African Languages Technology Initiative (ALTI) offers opportunity to researchers to redefine their interest and move in the direction of a multidisciplinary interfacing, engaging ICT, adopting and localizing technology. He identifies the merits of ICT in relation to the benefits it offers African languages, cultures and peoples. These are:

- Provides an opportunity to tackle the problem of endangerment and language death pragmatically and cost-effectively.
- Provides an opportunity to move from ‘communication Babel to linguistic Pentecost’.
- Provides the bridge between languages, the gateway between cultures and the network between minds.

Egbokhare further opines that in view of the fact that ICT offers these opportunities, we should “engage it, adopt and deploy it”.

More benefits of ICT are enumerated by Urua (2004). These include:

- Storing of data pertaining to different aspects of Nigerian languages and cultures
- Enhancing accessibility of materials on various Nigerian languages
- Facilitating the collaboration of available material resources

Principles of ICT Integration

Pope and Golub (2000) contend that in this ICT-dominated era, language arts teachers must be ready to “step into the status quo as well as to advance the teaching profession by infusing technology into their teaching”. Teacher educators on their own part should be models of that process. To buttress this point, Pope and Golub (opcit) highlight seven principles, which they describe as touchstones for infusing technology into language arts teacher preparation schemes. These are the basic steps to be taken in order to enhance language teaching and learning experience. They are:

- introduce and infuse technology in context;
- focus on the importance of technology as a literacy tool;
- model language arts learning and teaching while infusing technology;
- evaluate critically when and how to use technology in the language arts classroom;
- provide a wide range of opportunities to use technology;
- examine and determine ways of analyzing, evaluating and grading language arts technology projects; and
- emphasize issues of equity and diversity

The Way Forward

A few years back, predictions were made pertaining to the changes ICT will bring in its effort to create the possibilities for new forms of behaviour and of education. Of the ten predictions (Warschauer, 2000b), two are of particular interest to this paper. These are:

- That the Internet will change from being exclusive to being a mass form of communication. By the year 2005 it is predicted that some 700 million non-English speakers will be online, including more than 300 million Chinese.
- That change will entail moving from English to multilingual. By 2005, the number of Web pages in English is expected to drop to 41% of the world's total. Consequently, the situation will be that of diglossia, with people using their own native languages for local or regional communication, and commerce, and English for most international communication and commerce on the Internet.

The nagging question is; how ready is Nigeria to account for the predictions in view of the fact that the year 2005 is only a few months away? For some multilingual nations such as China, the prediction will come true. For Nigeria, the prediction has to be carried over to a later date. For now, there are urgent steps to be taken. First, there has to be the political will to put in place some kind of policy that spells out the details and procedures for integrating ICT into the teaching/learning of Nigerian languages. Such a policy should address the problems of:

- availability of facilities such as, computers, telephones and general Internet connectivity. Some Nigerian languages are already benefiting by having websites and programmes online. The Hausa language has the privilege of being projected by the BBC and other international broadcasting services;
- digital literacy to empower those who are involved in teaching and learning of these languages. When facilities are available and people cannot use them, then they are practically not available. There is also need to nativise technology to make digital literacy possible. A good example is the development of the Yoruba keyboard as reported in Egbokare (2003), which is an innovation that has the potential for redefining literacy for Yoruba speakers; and
- production of content in local languages. Government should encourage materials production in Nigerian languages. One development that is worthy of note is the production of the Nigerian National Anthem in ten Nigerian languages by Meche who thrilled the audience at the pre-independence celebration concert at Abuja on the 29th of September, 2004.

When the above-mentioned problems are addressed, integration of ICT into the teaching and learning of Nigerian languages will then be made easy and will no doubt contribute to the movement towards the accomplishment of the predictions for 2005 and beyond.

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3. Nigerian Languages & Linguistics in the Era of Information & Communication Technology*

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Introduction

The twenty-first century is indeed the era of information and communication technology (henceforth ICT). Computers, which were initially glorified calculators used mainly for number crunching and information processing, have now become major tools of communication and exchange of information. Telephones and other communication devices, on the other hand, which were used solely as such have now become, in addition, digital devices with varying capacities for information processing, i.e., mini computers. The two technologies have therefore now converged into one, hence the term ICT.

The Internet is a complex network of millions of computers located all over the world which communicate with one another to exchange information through the information super highway. It will be shown in this paper that the Internet, ICT and globalisation are all opportunities and threats simultaneously, depending on how we choose to use them or not use them as linguists and as speakers of Nigerian languages.

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Linguistics and ICT

To be a successful twenty-first century linguist, one must be computer literate and have one's own computer and an email address. One must also have access to the Internet for at least three hours a week. The era when academics wrote their draft papers in long hand for semi-literate typists to add their own mistakes to their (academics) own is gone, hence the necessity to have one's own computer and be computer literate. An email address enables one to be in constant touch with the world intellectual community, including journal editors and conference organisers, and to by-pass the slow and unreliable (snail mail) postal system. Access to the Internet is now 24 hours a day, seven days a week for our counterparts in the developed world who tend to have permanent connections both at home and in the office, but given our constraints (unreliable power supply, unreliable or expensive telephone service, limited availability of wireless access) access for three hours a week (i.e. one hour a day every other day of the week) is the absolute minimum for an academic linguist to be able to function as an informed member of the global intellectual community. It is sad to report that even these minimum requirements are an unattainable luxury for most Nigerian academics today.

In the developed world, linguistics now uses digital tools for analysis, such as sophisticated software which imparts ear-training skills or carries out lexicostatistical analyses. At the Lancaster University Department of Linguistics where I spent my sabbatical leave in 2002, the old Language Laboratory has got rid of its numerous machines and now has only computers with appropriate software installed for all kinds of linguistic analyses. I also found that ear training is now imparted to the students by a software in the computer laboratory, not by the lecturer.

Linguistic Resources on the Internet

There are thousands of resources for linguists on the Internet, most of them free, but a few have to be paid for, usually by credit card, which, thankfully is just beginning to be available to Nigerians through the initiative of a few enterprising Nigerian banks. The foremost website for linguists is *Linguist List* (www.linguistlist.org), a site “dedicated to providing information on language and language analysis and providing the discipline of linguistics with the infrastructure necessary to function in the digital world”. Access to the site and its considerable resources is free, and one can join the mailing list as soon as one registers. Through the mailing list, one receives information about new publications, tables of content of journals, conferences, jobs and discussions on topical issues.

Bibliographies are also available by topic and by language. For example, there are bibliographies on specialised topics, such as agreement, corpus linguists or lexical semantics, which a search through the Linguist List or other websites might yield. There are also language-specific (and even author-specific) bibliographies (e.g. there is one on Dwight Bolinger). As a sad reflection of our under-representation as active contributors to the resources of the Internet, there are no bibliographies on any Nigerian language that I know of.

Dictionaries are also available online through the Linguist List website. One of these is the *Dictionnaire Bilingue Francais-Anglais*, a bilingual French-English Dictionary. Again, there is a paucity of entries on Nigerian languages, the only two I could find were a trilingual dictionary of Hausa, German and English called *Kofar Hausa* (The Door to Hausa) containing some 9,000 entries and compiled by the Department of African Studies, University of Vienna, Austria, and an online dictionary of English-Igbo-Yoruba-Hausa-Pidgin English said

to contain more than 29,000 words and posted on the website of the Nigerian Computer Society ([http://www. Nigeriancomputersociety.com](http://www.Nigeriancomputersociety.com)). However, to access the dictionary, it appears that one needs to be a registered member of the Society.

Fonts are also available, most of them free, especially from the Summer Institute of Linguistics website (www.sil.org). These range from IPA fonts to language-specific fonts. It is gratifying to note that a Nigerian resident in America, Mr Walter Oluwole, has now converted the old pan-Nigerian typeface to digital format by making it into a pan- Nigerian computer keyboard. This keyboard, called *KONYIN*, can be purchased in the United States of America for between \$48.5 and \$60. However, the Nigerian Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) also has a Nigerian font that can be used for Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. This can be downloaded free from its website by using the following URL: (www.nitda.org/projects/kbd/index/php).

Software is also available for free downloads from most linguistic sites, including Linguist List and SIL. From SIL, for instance, one can download the *Praat* and other phonetic training or phonetic transcription tools. One can also download the *Phon version 4.1*, which is ‘a software tool for developing and testing models of regular historical sound change’.

Ethnologue, which is an ‘encyclopaedic reference work cataloguing all of the world’s 6,912 known living languages’ is a publication of the Summer Institute of Linguistics and is in its 15th edition this year (2005). An online version of the publication is posted to the Ethnologue website (www.ethnologue.com) for free downloading. There are

country specific reports containing language maps, language lists complete with an estimate of the number of speakers, dialects, classification and other details. This website is indispensable to any serious Nigerian linguist.

Nigerian Languages and ICT

The opportunities presented by ICT to Nigerian linguists and linguists working on Nigerian languages are enormous and diverse. These languages can now be recorded in digital format for analysis or storage and can be posted on the Internet through dedicated websites to be shared with the rest of the world. As many of the languages spoken by small groups of speakers are endangered, there is an added urgency to do this for as many languages as possible before they disappear from the scene. The availability of digital hardware and software tools should make the analysis of many more Nigerian languages easier than the drudgery it used to be when there was no option to manual analysis. Nigerian linguists do need to make their presence felt by contributing to the world body of knowledge on the Internet. Nigerian language groups should also use the Internet as a tool to keep their languages alive and active through dedicated websites.

Globalization, Language Shift and the Future of Nigerian Languages

The Nigerian national language policy has been much criticised as flawed in conception by emphasizing the teaching and development of only the three major languages (Hausa Igbo and Yoruba) and also for the grand sabotage that has resulted in its monumental implementation failure. Regrettably, we are now harvesting the rotten fruits of our collective acts of commission and omission in this regard. Given the fact that 13 Nigerian languages cover between them some 87% of the population of Nigeria (Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba,

Fulfulde, Kanuri, Ibibio, Tiv, Izon, Edo, Nupe, Urhobo, Igla and Annang), the policy ought to have provided for the development and teaching of all these languages as equals while allowing State and Local Governments to develop the other languages and determine their appropriate use as media of instruction. The failure of the policy to spread the three major languages so that one of them, through natural selection, would emerge as the national language of Nigeria, is mainly due to our attitudes not only to the languages of our compatriots but also to our own languages.

Several reports (e.g. Bamgbose 1994) have indicated that most Nigerian parents prefer their children to have a headstart in English and therefore prefer it as medium of instruction, and sometimes even as the language of the home, to their own languages. Little wonder then that in State schools little or no attempt has been made to teach the 'other tongue' as enshrined in the policy, when even the mother-tongue was not much thought of. The result is that all Nigerian languages are now endangered, not just the minority or minor languages, and face the threat of extinction in the long-run.

Language shift, according to Trudgill (2002), is 'the process by which a community more or less gradually abandons its original language and via an intermediate stage of bilingualism, adopts another. So far, the various reports of the endangerment and even extinction of small group languages have been pointing accusing fingers at neighbouring predator Nigerian languages, such as Hausa, Fulfulde, Jukun, Nupe, Efik, Idoma, Kanuri, Yoruba and Igbo as the beneficiaries of the weakening or disappearance of their smaller neighbours (see, for instance, Kujū (1999), Omale-Peters (2000), Ejele (2003), Ansa (2004), and Okon (2004)). Now, however, there are other reports which suggest that language shift is taking place away from all Nigerian languages, including the three

major languages, towards English. For example, Afiesimama (1991) is reported to have found that 34% of primary school children in Rivers State could not speak any Nigerian language while Afiesimama (1995) reports that 60% of children in the University of Port Harcourt Staff Primary School spoke English at home even though some of their parents had a common language. Ohiri-Aniche (2001) found that even among children from a major language group (Igbo), 18% in private schools and 10% in Federal Government Colleges could not speak their native language. Oluwabamide (2004) also found, in a survey of language use between mothers and children in Lagos and Uyo, that most parents from the higher socio-economic groups speak to their children in English with the consequence that most of their children cannot speak their native languages.

Given this trend, it is only a matter of three generation or so before a complete shift towards English occurs. It appears reasonable to expect that the minority and minor languages of Nigeria will experience shifts in two stages: first to a 'predator' Nigerian language and then to English and this should occur within the next 50 years or so unless aggressive counter measures are put in place. It also appears reasonable to expect that the major languages of Nigeria will hold out for much longer but that they too will succumb to the pressure from English, unless aggressive counter measures are put in place.

Language shift appears to be historically and universally normal. Wherever we come across strong languages with millions of speakers (such as Arabic, Hindi, Chinese or English) we can be sure that they became that strong only by appropriating the speakers of other languages to themselves through a process of language shift occasioned by empire building or other factors. It has also been suggested in the literature that bilingualism is but a transitional stage towards

language shift or language death.

Globalisation is simply the domination of the world system by the West, led by the United States of America in a unipolar world where there is no other rival power to challenge its hegemony. One of the strongest manifestations of globalization is the Internet, which is English-mediated and English-dominated. Part of the explanation for the gradual shift towards English in Nigeria is to be found in its prestige as the globalizing language.

Conclusion

Both ICT and globalization offer great opportunities for us to strengthen our languages and enhance their survival if we can harness their considerable resources to our advantage. We can have, for instance, not only language-specific websites on the Internet but also satellite television channels dedicated to, say the Igbo language for the millions of Igbo speakers resident in the United States of America and elsewhere and their compatriots at home in Nigeria, and a Yoruba satellite channel dedicated to the Yorubas at home and in the diaspora. These are projects which can make money for their financiers, apart from performing a vital community service in the preservation and development of language and culture. We should not, therefore, wait for Government to do these things for us but should mobilise our own resources and put our money where our mouth is. Similarly, it is time to stop blaming Government for the failure of the national language policy and begin to direct the searchlight on ourselves as individuals and communities: we must use our languages and speak them to our children if we want to counter the strong destructive current of globalisation and English-dominated ICT.

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4. Exploiting Information Technology Resources in the Development of Nigerian Languages*

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Information Technology is the current research tool utilised in virtually all areas of human endeavour to achieve phenomenal strides. Indigenous Nigerian languages have struggled with the problem of relevance in a changing world, especially when juxtaposed with the roles and functions of languages such as English, Arabic and French. In this paper we explore how we can tap into the Information Technology resources for the development of indigenous Nigerian Languages in the 21st century and beyond.

1. Introduction

Various individuals, groups, linguists, governments (local, national and continental), statesmen and women, have long recognised the fact that Nigerian (African) languages have been neglected and marginalized (Urua forthcoming) with a consequent loss of status and relevance and that the languages needed to be 're-invented' or to 'reinvent' themselves, as it were. This situation of African languages and the aspirations associated with these languages are encapsulated in the words of Alpha Oumar Konare, the immediate past President of the

*An earlier version of this paper was published in Ndimele, O.-M. (ed.). 2004. *Language & Culture in Nigeria: A Festschrift for Okon Essien*. Aba: National Institute for Nigerian Languages.

Republic of Mali during the launch of the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN):

It is time our continent provided itself with the means to make of African languages working languages in all the fields of public life. Only then will we make of our Regional Economic Communities true instruments of African integration, and the African Union will become a reality for our peoples rehabilitated and reinstalled in their identity and in the historical and cultural continuity of their areas. Thus, the vehicular cross-border languages will strengthen the relationships between the populations, beyond the political boundaries, which should be considered, as we always said, not as separation lines but rather as stitches for the lacerated sociocultural tissue, torn to pieces only 116 years ago, stitching lines for these border lands and villages of our continent so much in search of unity.

Although the deplorable situation of African languages, on the one hand, and the great potentials of these languages, on the other, have been so affirmed, very little has been done, in spite of the highfaluting rhetoric, to rectify the situation. At various stages in the history of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union (AU), plans were and are still being made to utilise the indigenous languages to achieve developmental goals/targets. Sometimes, the goals have been scuttled, and today, steps have been retraced to the necessity and relevance of fully utilising African languages for regional and intra-continental cooperation.

In recognition of the importance of African languages for regional integration and development, the African Union has accepted the idea of the establishment of the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN). We commend the vision of the

President of Mali for initiating the admirable mission. The aims, objectives and principles in ACALAN's Plan of Action include the following:

- To encourage each and every member state to have a clearly defined language policy
- To ensure that all languages within the boundaries of member states are recognised and accepted as a source of mutual enrichment
- To liberate the African peoples from undue reliance on the utilisation of non-indigenous languages as the dominant, official language of the state in favour of the gradual take-over of appropriate and carefully selected indigenous African languages in this domain
- To ensure that African languages, by appropriate legal provision and practical promotion, assume their rightful role as the means of official communication in the public affairs of each member state in replacement of European languages which have hitherto played this role
- To encourage the increased use of African languages as vehicles of instruction at all educational levels
- To ensure that all the sectors of the political and socio-economic system of each member state are mobilised in such a manner that they play their due part in ensuring that the African languages prescribed as official languages assume their intended role in the shortest time possible
- To foster and promote national, regional and continental linguistic unity in Africa in the context of the multilingualism prevailing in most African countries.

These objectives suggest that African languages have not been fulfilling the roles that such languages ought to play. Many of the languages are yet to be used as vehicles of instruction;

many are yet to be established as official languages and few are promoted as national, regional or continental languages. Even many more are yet to be documented and described.

An examination of the ACALAN objectives shows that many of the over 1000 languages spoken in Africa are not in a position to meet the stated objectives of the action plan for obvious reasons, including the general one of having the status of undeveloped or unempowered languages. We shall explore ways of improving the developmental status of African/Nigerian languages. The rest of the paper is organised as follows: section 2 examines Nigerian languages and their developmental status; section 3 presents the general benefits of utilising IT resources and general and specific examples of how the endoglossic languages can be developed using IT resources; in section 4, we look at the requirements that are needed to exploit available IT resources and conclude in section 5.

2. Status of Nigerian languages

In considering this topic, we shall limit our discussion to the language situation in Nigeria since we believe that the issues raised with regard to Nigeria can be extended or amended to apply to the needs of other African countries.

Languages spoken in Nigeria can be classified into different groups according to different criteria. For our purpose, we shall classify Nigerian languages into two categories, endoglossic and exoglossic. The endoglossic languages are those languages that are considered to be indigenous to Nigeria, and they include over 500 of the languages listed in Grimes (2000). The exoglossic languages are those that have been introduced from other countries into Nigeria over the years (Arabic, English, French).

Crozier and Blench (1992) list over 400 languages and Ethnologue (2000) lists over 500 languages for Nigeria. The

Ethnologue list includes both endoglossic and exoglossic languages. Since the number of exoglossic languages is negligible, there will be no further discussion on the exoglossic languages except, perhaps, to compare their status with the status of the endoglossic languages. We shall examine the level of development of indigenous Nigerian languages using certain indices, which shall include language documentation and description, language use and relevance, language standardisation, language of instruction and media participation.

2.1 Language documentation and description

Given the number of indigenous languages, very few of them have received any kind of documentation and even fewer have any degree of description. For some time now the best documented and described indigenous Nigerian languages include Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. About a handful more have been added to that list but the number remains insignificant in comparison to the total number of endoglossic languages spoken in Nigeria. In order therefore to consider indigenous languages as attaining some degree of development, there is a need for urgent documentation and description of these languages. Without documentation, not much can be known or done scientifically about the language.

2.2 Language use and relevance

Fishman (1991) advocates that one way of maintaining endangered languages is by that language to be used at home. Many indigenous languages are relegated to domestic use only, i.e., the level of the family. But in recent times, even that role is being threatened. In a bid to provide children with what parents regard as a head start in the fluency and mastery of the English language, parents who share a common indigenous language now use the English language at home

and indirectly coerce visitors to their homes to speak to the children in English on the pretext that the children do not understand the local language. Moreover, cultural and social activities, which had hitherto enjoyed the monopoly of indigenous languages, find the exoglossic languages encroaching on these functions. Such areas include traditional marriage ceremonies, award of traditional honours and recognitions, etc. Many of these functions are now being conducted in the English language, on the pretext that Nigerians now have relations and acquaintances and colleagues across the ethnic group divide in Nigeria, and these speak different languages. Inter-ethnic marriages among Nigerians are also on the increase. Therefore, people argue that there is a need for the use of a common language, widely understood by the different parties – that language is English! These instances and more, suggest the rapid erosion of the traditional functions of indigenous languages in Nigeria as a result of the changing linguistic landscape and language shift in Nigeria.

2.3 Language standardisation

A large percentage of indigenous Nigerian languages have not been codified in any sense – there have no orthographies, dictionaries or grammars and are therefore not standardised nor codified in any way. Hudson (1980) and other sociolinguists agree that for a language to be considered developed, it should be standardised with an orthography, literary works, reference materials, used as language of instruction and of the media, etc. Only a limited number of the indigenous Nigerian languages have been standardised in any sense of the word. Not up to fifty of the over five hundred endoglossic languages spoken in Nigeria can be considered to be standardised. When a language is standardised, it has achieved the first stage of its development and other

developmental manifestations can take root from there.

2.4 Language of instruction and media participation

Although the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1998:9 says that “every child shall learn the language of the immediate community”, many of our indigenous languages have not been equipped to undertake that exercise. As has been observed in section 2.3, many of our endoglossic languages have neither been codified nor standardised, have no descriptive or reference grammars, lack trained personnel to assist the children to learn the language of his/her immediate community. But more significantly, the NPE is careful to say that the child ‘shall learn’ not ‘shall be taught in’, which introduces another dimension, i.e., using the mother tongue as a language of instruction. As a medium or language of instruction in schools, it is the big three, viz., Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba (and a few others) that enjoy this status. In fact, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba languages are required to be taught in schools outside their geographical zones “in the interest of national unity...” (NPE 1998:9). The reason may not be far-fetched – because they are the best documented and described; these languages already have language dictionaries, grammar books, literary texts, reference materials and trained personnel necessary for such an exercise. But more is still needed in the area of IT resource utilisation, even for these so called developed endoglossic Nigerian languages.

Studies have shown that people appreciate information better and also learn better if such information is transmitted in a language they understand (Fafunwa 1975; Skutnabb-Kangas 2000). Most Nigerians who live in the rural areas are generally monolingual or minimally bilingual. The print and electronic media utilise English and a few indigenous languages. The majority of Nigerians obviously cannot assess the information conveyed in such mediums, because the

information is not conveyed in a language they understand. It is important that rural populations are reached in a medium to which they can relate. The development of our indigenous languages can make this possible.

A look at Crozier and Blench's (1992) and Grimes (2002) provide a fair idea of the level of development plus other information about Nigerian languages. They provide information on each language as to whether it has been written, is used in the media, has had the Bible translated into it, number of speakers, used as language of instruction in schools, studied in higher institutions, etc. The picture that emerges is that very few of our over 400 hundred languages have achieved a reasonable level of development, a very negligible percentage indeed. Another important indication of how well developed a language is, lies in the degree of relevance of that language.

It is therefore crucial that those (of us) whose business is language dwell seriously on how this issue of non-development of our indigenous languages can be urgently addressed. Having shown the dwindling level of relevance of indigenous Nigerian languages, it is important that as concerned and interested members of the Nigerian linguistic community, we suggest strategies to address this unsatisfactory and inexcusable situation.

One way of addressing the problem of the non-development of indigenous languages in Nigeria in the context of the 21st century and current scientific and technological development, is to look to the area of Information Technology (henceforth IT). In the next section we shall address ourselves to how IT can assist in the development of indigenous Nigerian languages.

3. Information Technology¹

Information Technology involves the processing of information, the storage of such information, the distribution and assessment of such information with the use of the computer, modern telecommunication and digital devices. This suggests that information and data can now be organised electronically in more friendly ways.

Having clearly set out the need for the development of Nigerian and African languages, we propose one way of achieving this admirable goal, given the resources available to us in the 21st century. It is our belief that for our indigenous languages to be re-positioned to take their rightful place in the development and integration of Africa's citizens, as is envisioned in ACALAN's Plan of Action, it is necessary to tap into the resources offered by the very topical issue of Information Technology.

The IT resources we are thinking about here are the Internet and the World Wide Web. The Internet is a flexible computer-based global information system with many interconnected computer networks, linking thousands of computers, to enable them to share information. With the Internet it is now possible for people, businesses and governments throughout the world to communicate quickly and inexpensively. It has a wide range of uses including research, teaching, taxation and shopping.

The Web consists of programmes running on many computers and permits a user to find and display multimedia (multimodal) documents (documents with a combination of text, photographs, graphics, audio and video).

3.1 Benefits of Exploiting IT resources for the development of Nigerian languages

There are obvious advantages of utilising IT resources for the development of Nigerian languages. An important advantage

is that of storage capacity for various kinds of information and data. Information and data pertaining to different aspects of our languages and cultures can be stored in a limited space.

Another closely related important advantage is accessibility – the resources and materials available on the various languages are readily and easily accessible with a click of the mouse or button. It will raise the level of awareness of the language speakers about their languages and what materials are available. Owners of the language will also have a sense of pride that their language is part of a recognised and appreciated global cultural heritage.

When Nigerian languages are easily accessible, it means that these languages and cultures are given wide promotion and publicity, thus generating more interest from people to carry out research on various aspects of these languages, leading to further development.

Available materials and resources can easily and quickly be collated. For instance, if one needs to know the number of languages in Nigeria and such information is available on different websites on the Internet, that kind of data can be put together quite easily and quickly.

3.2 Ways of exploiting IT resources for the development of Nigerian languages

Lack of frequent use of indigenous languages in the domestic (cf. Fishman 1991) and formal settings has been identified as one area that militates against the development of these languages. The situation can be reversed if the members of a speech community are sensitised to the importance of their language. Government programmes can be translated into the local languages to make them have more impact on the community. This falls in the area of cyber information dissemination. Using the current IT resources, community radio stations and information centres can be set up to

disseminate information to the people in their local languages. We can borrow a leaf from India's *Simputer* project, which provides information to local communities in local languages at a rate affordable to members of the local language communities. The Simputer is "a low cost portable alternative to PCs, by which the benefits of IT can reach the common man". It is especially suitable for the third world with high illiteracy rates (www.simputer.org). The advantages of this type of IT resource are multifaceted – apart from disseminating information on developmental programmes from government and other agencies or other programmes of community interest, it also makes people in the rural areas aware of IT resources and the benefits of such resources and how they themselves can utilise the resources for community development. Much of these fall into what Crystal (2000:142) calls giving a 'public profile' to language or making the language more visible.

The bane of development in general in Nigeria is the absence of reliable statistics. Language statistics is not excluded from this national dilemma. Of the 515 Nigerian languages (Grimes 2000), very few have been documented or described. In fact, accurate language census figures for Nigeria is absent. Tapping into the IT resources available can minimise the problem. We can now document these languages computationally using IT resources. Computationally documenting these languages will have a spiralling effect on other areas of language development. For instance, it will be possible to provide useful descriptions of the languages and development of various language resources based on the information obtained in the documentation project. Computational documentation of languages presupposes the presence of computers and other IT tools such as the Internet and the World Wide Web.

African leaders are discussing the possibility of using

African languages for regional and continental communication and the easiest way to accomplish this splendid and desirable objective is by utilising IT resources. Standardisation of languages through the development of uniform orthographies for Nigerian and cross border languages within and outside Nigeria in the African continent can be more easily implemented with the use of IT resources.

Moreover, language resources, such as electronic dictionaries, can be developed for as many languages as possible on the continent, reducing the cost and pain of language resource development. IT resources such as the Shoebox and Microsoft Excel and Access software can be used for the building up of the necessary database for dictionary making.

Another advantage of utilising IT resources is the possibility and practice of resource sharing, which reduces the cost of having to replicate resources from scratch for every language in the country and on the continent. With these shared resources available on the Internet, teaching and learning these languages on local, national and continental levels are feasible and easier.

Networking is essential in order to make the best of the available IT resources. Unfortunately in Nigeria and this can be said of the rest of Africa, because of poor communication tools and an absence of good networking facilities, there is a notorious absence of information on current research within the same discipline in Nigerian/African universities/research institutions; it is difficult to have reliable information on what research activities are conducted in Nigeria and in Africa. It is much easier for Nigerians, for instance, to be knowledgeable about what their American, Asian and European colleagues are doing than what colleagues in Nigeria are involved in. This is possible for the simple fact that these regions have maximally exploited IT resources for research and other

developmental programmes. On-line journals, books, lessons, and websites of various organisations detailing their activities are available. Networking within and outside Nigeria is therefore critical. It is a positive sign that presently the National Universities Commission through the NUNET (although not completely linked to all universities and research institutions in Nigeria) has established e-journals and is (the NUC) working on making distance learning more effective using IT resources.

In order to effectively develop our languages using IT resources, there is a need to create a large corpora – building up a database of information on all our languages from speeches, recorded materials, texts, etc. The availability of such a large corpora will make materials accessible and easily extractible. Already several languages have large corpora including Kiswahili, English, German, etc. Very few Nigerian languages can boast of such robust corpora.

Research results and projects, including students' work could be stored electronically. In other words, in addition to having paper reports, researchers and students could provide diskette copies of their project work. There are several advantages to this – many of such projects can then be put together in a diskette or CD Rom, with minimal space and cost; secondly, the reports and projects become more easily accessible to other users; thirdly, in this era where students move from one university to another to plagiarise other students' projects, it would be easy to keep track of project titles, abstracts and where such work has been done, thereby reducing the incidence of plagiarism. The University of Uyo Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages is starting such a collection with the 2001/2002 graduating students' projects.

These are general suggestions on the possibilities of making use of IT resources for language development in

Nigeria. There are specific examples of what has been done already and also projects that are on-going.

Dr. Uwe Seibert of the Summer Institute of Linguistics and the University of Jos, Jos, Nigeria, has an excellent website on Nigerian languages². According to Seibert the website serves the following purpose:

- to enlighten you on the language ecology of Nigeria
- to report on ongoing research on Nigerian languages
- to inform you about opportunities for studying Nigerian languages here in Jos and abroad
- to emphasize the urgent need for the documentation of the endangered languages of Nigeria

I think that this may be the first website that is devoted exclusively to Nigerian languages from Nigeria although it appears to be hosted by the University of Iowa. It deserves commendation. This website has several links to other useful pages and also provides information on practical ways of language documentation, writing reference grammars and related matters.

The University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria, for instance, has a Speech Synthesis Project partly sponsored by the DAAD, Hewlett Packard and Outside Echo Ltd. The project is collaborative involving the Department of Computer Science and the Department of Linguistics & Nigerian Languages and the Department of Linguistics and Literature, University of Bielefeld, Germany. Speech synthesis involves the ability of the computer to generate spoken words or audio that resemble human speech through the use of diphones, which involves the splicing of prerecorded words and bringing them together. It is “an area of IT which is ... suitable for supporting the development of local languages” with various beneficial practical applications including the presentation of

information for illiterate societies (especially in adult literacy programmes, dissemination of information on government programmes, etc.), provision of talking speech for the blind, geographical information systems (GIS), information for use in hostile environments, i.e., in dangerous situations, such as plane crash, etc., speech-to-speech translation, multimodal (multimedia) systems for education, information and entertainment. With speech synthesis it is now possible for computers to scan printed text and speak the words aloud, which can be very beneficial for the blind or visually challenged people. The resources required for the speech synthesis project are linguistic, computational and financial. Linguistically, an electronic dictionary/lexical database is required and work has already started in this area. The e-dictionary and lexical database will provide the input to the production of print and electronic (CD Rom, WWW) media. Some of the linguistic materials that will be utilised in the ongoing speech synthesis project are already available, e.g., there is the Ibibio dictionary (Kaufman 1985), in the area of grammar there is Essien (1990) and in phonology (Urua 2000) and finally there is the area of language documentation which will include digital recording of relevant registers by speakers, phonemic annotations using appropriate speech software such as the Transcriber, Praat, etc., compilation of a diphone database and recording of diphones in context and annotation of the diphones.

Computational needs include hardware and software – computers, fast, broadband internet access, which should be free for researchers and developers and diphone database tools (Windows or Linux), speech annotation tools such as Transcriber, Praat, DiphoneStudio or Windows tools available from MBROLA.

On the financial level, some funding exists from the DAAD funded proposed University of Uyo MA degree programme in

Computational Documentation of Local Languages. But there is need for additional funding, given the resources required from all the components of the Speech Synthesis Project. Additional support has been received from Hewlett Packard and Outside Echo Ltd. Funding is also expected from government, the University and relevant Departments, private and multinational companies, linguistic and other sociocultural groups and other stakeholders in the language community.³

Although the benefits of the Speech Synthesis Project can be channelled to the development of local languages as we have already mentioned, it is obvious that there has to be cooperation of various interest groups – linguists, computer scientists and engineers, the academic community, the language community and the business community for effective and efficient actualisation of research results.

I do not know how many Nigerian languages are involved in a speech synthesis project such as we have described above, but I am aware that such a project is on-going for Yoruba (Tunde Adegbola of TIWA systems in Ibadan, Nigeria). The point to make is that such projects are necessary for the development of our languages in order to accord them the desired relevance in the present IT era and it is of utmost importance that such work be done in cooperation, sharing research resources, results, problems and promise.

Secondly, there are many websites with massive information on African and Nigerian languages. Some of them are specialised and others are general. For instance, Dr. Uwe Seibrt's web page on Nigerian languages, is a rich resource of information on Nigerian languages; CBOLD managed by Professor Larry Hyman of the University of California, Berkeley is an interactive on-line dictionary on Bantu languages where researchers may add or assess information; WARA, the West African Research Centre in Dakar, Senegal

has a site for work done on African languages, literature and cultures. The Summer Institute of Linguistics has a website at www.sil.org and is a rich source of information and resources for language teaching, research and development. Work done in some Lower Cross languages as part of the on-going Language Documentation Project can be found at www.spectrum.uni-bielefeld.de/LangDoc/EGA/index.html. In addition, there are several CD Roms available that are useful for the development of Nigerian languages (SIL's Ethnologue CD Rom, Steven Bird's Linguistic Data Consortium's CD Rom on Grassfields Bantu Fieldwork on Ngomba Tone Data, Keith Snider's CD Rom on Tone, Hyman and Udoh's Leggbo on-line dictionary and several others).

4. Resources required

It would be naïve to think or suggest that exploiting IT resources for the development of Nigerian languages would come cheap. Such a project needs human and technological resources in addition to massive funding (Tadadjeu and Chiato (2002), Urua (2003)). From the human perspective, it will require the training and retraining of linguists in modern IT application. Linguists and other resource persons working in the field of language development need to be able to make use of computers, browse the Internet and websites, utilise multimedia in teaching and research, create websites for the indigenous languages and cultural groups, etc. Satellite communication devices and computer hardware and software are necessary for the development of the languages. Taken together, both human and technological involvement require huge financial layout. It is therefore important that the various tiers of government, private sector, sociocultural groups and other stakeholders are persuaded on the need to provide adequate funding for human development and technological acquisition in the area of language development. One way to

train is by starting programmes in the universities with adequate financial and institutional support as is being initiated in Uyo with initial funding support from the German Academic Foundation (DAAD). It is unrealistic to expect that the amount of funding required can come from a single source, such as the government. Funding must of necessity be multisourced – government, private industries, multinational groups, universities and research institutions, sociocultural groups and all stakeholders in language in Nigeria. When funding is derived from many interested sources, more accountability, probity and a desire to achieve success will be the set goal. Everyone will have a stake in the success of our language development programmes.

5. Conclusion

IT resources such as the Internet and World Wide Web have revolutionised the approach to problem solving, including language problems. Within a split second, and with a few clicks of the computer mouse button, it is now possible to access information thousands of miles away. It is also possible to collect and store masses of information (data) that using paper would ordinarily occupy tens of buildings, on just a single CD Rom. Information is available to anyone who has access to the Internet. Languages (especially previously unknown ones) have assumed a public profile through websites, e-mails, chat groups, etc. (Crystal 2001). Carrying out research with the availability of IT resources considerably reduces the time needed to search for information and makes research much more fun! Given this scenario, we believe that what had been thought to be insurmountable in the development of Nigerian languages, can be made much easier if and when we invest extensively in IT resources for our people. We can utilise shared ideas and resources, especially the inexpensive ones, such as the Simputer developed in

India. Such resources can be modified to suit our own peculiar circumstances. Ease of doing collaborative research, developing language teaching and learning resources, especially for cross border languages within Nigeria and across the African continent, given the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) framework, will be much easier when IT resources are exploited.

But in order to move beyond mere rhetoric to action, we must begin the process now. The ACALAN Plan of Action has important objectives and we sincerely believe that NINLAN being the clearinghouse of language issues in Nigeria should be empowered, in conjunction with other relevant arms of government, to actually move to implement these objectives. For instance, we can begin from the basics, which is having a clearly defined language policy for Nigeria and then proceed to the implementation stage, which is the real crux of the matter.

Finally, we provide some web site addresses as an appendix at the end of this paper. Please find time to visit them sometime and you will be pleasantly surprised at the treasures you will discover!

Endnotes

- * Some of the ideas presented in this paper have been presented at several other fora before now. I am very grateful to Professor Akintola Aboderin, Dr. Imelda Udoh and an anonymous reviewer for useful comments on earlier drafts of this paper.
- 1. For general definitions of IT terminology given in the text see Microsoft Encarta 2002.
- 2. I am grateful to Dr. Imelda Udoh for telling me about Dr. Uwe Seibert's website on Nigerian languages.
- 3. Much of the information provided in this section is from Gibbon 2003.

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Appendix: A few of the IT resources available (some of the addresses here were compiled by Juliane Lindenlaub 2003)

www ldc.upenn.edu/Anniversary/index.html
www.agtk.sourceforge.net
www ldc.upenn.edu/About
www ldc.upenn.edu/About/ldc_intro.shtml
www.terralingua.org/EndLangResources.html
www.terralingua.org/FundingEndLang.html
<http://coral.lili.uni-bielefeld.de/LangDoc/EGA/Docs/dobesLexQuest01/dobesLexQuest01.html>
<http://www.spectrum.uni-bielefeld.de/LeaP/outline.html>
<http://www.spectrum.uni-bielefeld.de/modelex/>
<http://coli.lili.uni-bielefeld.de/~metzing/Ringvorlesung/>
<http://www.spectrum.uni-bielefeld.de/LangDoc/EGA/index.html>
<http://tasxforce.lili.uni-bielefeld.de>
www.sil.org
<http://www.sil.org/computing/speechtools/speechanalyzer.htm>
www.spectrum.uni-bielefeld.de/modelex/publication/report/lrec_tt_dg.pdf
<http://mahogany.lib.utexas.edu/~ailla/dev/site/welcome.html>
www.aiatsis.gov.au/lbry
<http://emeld.org>
www.ijele.com
www.westafricareview.com
www.jendajournal.com
www.africanphilosophy.com
www.africaresource.com
www.african.gu.se/webresources
<http://www.egroups.com>

<http://www.simputer.org/>

<http://asc.leidenuniv.nl/library/abstracts/asa-online/>

<http://www.uiowa.edu/intlinet/unijos/nigonnet/nlp/welcome.htm>

5. Enhancing the Teaching & Learning of Indigenous Languages through Multimedia ICTs: The Foreign Language Experience

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Multimedia Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs), a computer-driven technology, is rapidly changing teaching and learning environments in almost every field, and language is not an exception. Multimedia ICTs rely on the computer's features of textual manipulations, sound production, graphics, animation and video effects with communication devices to stay relevant to language application. This basic understanding eludes the target users. Whereas the teaching and learning of major foreign languages are greatly enhanced by these technologies, almost nothing is happening with the major indigenous languages- Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. The purpose of this paper is to explore areas where ICTs have assisted the teaching and learning of major foreign languages with a view to encouraging similar developments in the teaching and learning of indigenous languages. Further, factors which militate against the use of ICTs in Indigenous language teaching and learning are also discussed. It is believed that a *relevant* and *fast* application of ICTs in this area should borrow the foreign language experience.

1. Introduction

Strategy for effective teaching and learning of languages (both

foreign and local) occupies a centre-stage in today's ever-changing world. So important is this issue that discussions and plans for enhancement of the teaching and learning of language have become part of agendas of most respected union of countries. For example, in a recent review of European perspective on ICT and language learning [1], Angela Chambers, an editor in Europe, shares the view that:

... multilingualism and language diversity are considered as priorities, not only in the economic sphere as a means of ensuring mobility of workers, but also in the political context of European integration...

Thus, realizing the role that language could play in the life of a continent, its effective teaching and learning is being encouraged, by the European commission, for instance, by "... given collaborative language projects significant attention, in particular, those dealing with Information and Communication Technologies and education" [1].

Taking a cue from this foreign initiative, there is no doubt that multimedia Information and Communication Technologies hold the key to effective indigenous language teaching and learning. This would be by surmounting the challenges faced by indigenous language teachers and learners in the acquisition of receptive and productive oral and written skills coupled with the communicative, pragmatic, cultural and intercultural competencies [2][3]. It therefore behooves Nigerian language teachers and learners to embrace the use of ICTs in order to tap from its immense benefits.

2. A Leap into the World of Multimedia ICTs

ICTs, an acronym for Information and Communications Technologies, is a relative new tool for education in this part of the globe, hence the need to discuss it thoroughly. The question is what is ICT, and what does it involve?

One definition says that ICT refers to multimedia Personal Computer and the Internet [3]. The Internet is generally described as a computer-based global information system, composed of many interconnected computer networks, with each network linking tens, hundreds, or even thousands of computers, enabling them to share information with one another and to share computational resources such as powerful supercomputers and databases of information [4][5]. Arolasafe [6] records that ICT involves all forms of media production platforms that guarantees cross-communication of audio and video on the computer. Further and in an attempt to expose the innovative and exciting opportunities accruable from the use of ICT in language, LOTE's report [7] describes ICT as involving texts, graphics, sound, colour and video. Our interest in this paper is in line with this latest description, standing for multimedia ICT – a situation where *text*, *sound*, *graphics*, *animation* and *videos* can be employed for communication. These are briefly discussed as follows.

Text

The use of text constitutes a major block in multimedia ICT production effort. The term word processing is used to describe this. This term refers to the manipulation of and presentation of texts through colouring, sizing, laying emphasis (underline, bold, italics, etc.) and final printing [8].

When a user can do word processing, he types in language characters and generally responds to typing needs of an ICT language application.

Sound

Audio sound is another component of multimedia ICT that could be combined in multimedia language production effort. For this to happen, there is the need to record and format sound so that computer can understand and use it in language presentations and applications. Two formats of audio serves to provide for the incorporation of sound into multimedia applications. These are Waveform (WAV) and Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI).

If the intention is to record sounds such as music CDs and tapes as part of language applications, the WAV format is desirable. For voice recording which language teachers may want to do from time to time, the MIDI file format must be used to store instructions that enable devices called synthesizers to reproduce the sounds or music. The Microphone is a device necessary for sound recording on a multimedia computer.

Graphics

Graphics are either taken as photographs or drawn artistically to reflect certain scenarios. These pictures – photographs, drawings, and other still images are then changed into a format that the computer can manipulate and display. These formats are mostly the bit-mapped graphics for compact manipulation on the computer. Examples of these bit-mapped graphics formats are the Graphical Interchange Format (GIF),

Tagged Image File Format (TIFF), and the Windows Bitmap (BMP)[9]. The *digital camera* is a device necessary for instant photography while another device -a scanner – is useful for scanning other photographic pictures and symbols that can make language applications successful.

Animation

The possibility of including animations through different schemes into multimedia production has greatly expanded its scope. Generally speaking, animation is included in multimedia applications to add motion to images. We find such efforts useful in demonstrating our language words are formed or how sentences are constructed obeying all the syntactic and semantic rules. The usefulness of animation in enhancing existing graphics and video elements, and adding special effects to language applications, has made multimedia ICT production pleasurable [5].

Video

Language teaching and learning cannot be devoid of videos and so avenues abound in the multimedia computer for clips of full motion videos to be used for language media production. This would require special computer components and programs to obtain, format, and edit video elements. However, it must be stressed that the use of video files can be quite large, consuming multimedia resources at an alarming rate. Thus, it is a good practice to reduce them in size using the compression technique. For the mention, the Common video compression formats are Audio Video Interleave (AVI), Quicktime, and Motion Picture Experts Group (MPEG or

MPEG2). These are formats capable of compressing video files by more than 95 percent [5]. This no doubt allows multimedia video to get incorporated into presentations with ease.

3. Multimedia ICT Application Examples and Language Teaching and Learning

This section focuses on particular applications in multimedia ICT that can be used to promote the teaching and learning of indigenous languages. These are already tested applications for foreign languages.

Use of Self-Instructional Multimedia Language Software

A software is a set of instructions written to direct the hardware (computer and peripherals) to function for a particular purpose [8]. There are possibilities of language software being developed to direct the computer to function for particular language enhancement tasks. What this involves is the understanding of the manual ways by which the particular language task is conducted and then developing a software to ‘mimic’ the manual approach. So once developed, the computer becomes the conductor of the process.

Already, foreign language learning has taken a lead in this all-important language application. We have computer multimedia software such as *Story Maker2* [10]. The story Maker2 is designed to make language learners make active animated stories that speak French language on the computer. It is recorded that *“you can make a story where figures move across the screen, speak to you in French, appear and disappear and cause other things to happen.”* [10] This very useful software also has versions in German and Spanish language because it is by

far an intervention that allows inputs into a computer through the keyboard, mouse, scanner and video and then gives a teacher/learner outputs through the VDU screen and speakers!-A true multimedia ICT.

A software of this nature is useful to teachers in designing customized stories that suits and explains a particular topic being taught to students. This software could be translated to Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba, to assist learners. This is because this kind of software guarantees learners' autonomy and self-access in the language learning process since learners only interact with the multimedia computer in the process. This approach to language learning has been advanced variously by Furlong [3] and Benson [11].

The Use of Language Websites

This is another multimedia ICT applications that can be applied in the enhancement of teaching and learning of indigenous languages. This particular application could be used in the comprehension of difficult text and the acquisition of new vocabularies [3]. It is usually in form of websites on the Internet. Valuable information on language words and phrases, detailing translations, definitions, grammatical nature and indeed the relevant context of the use of such words must have been stored electronically in what is known as e-dictionary.

Similarly, websites could be created for the purpose of making word searches and cross-words. Examples of these websites – <http://www.foreignword.com> and <http://www.puzzlemaker.com> are detailed in the research by Furlong [3]. There is therefore no doubt that teachers and students of

indigenous languages would have a great deal of benefits “through varieties of sensorial experiences ...in print format, on screen and through crossword-grid design.”[3].

The Use of Word processors

Furlong’s research [3] provides a vivid account of how a word processor can engage in text manipulations often required in language applications by teachers and learners. These text manipulations often include changing cases (upper/lower case conversion), removing accents, removing spaces between words, removing punctuation and hard returns (for paragraphs to be continuous), scrambling a text either by sentence or by paragraph, and indeed creating a gap-fill exercise. The traditional ways of approaching foreign language topics is being quickly replaced by learners work on manipulated text strings which the interactive nature of use makes pleasurable and more effective. A standard word processing software (e.g. Microsoft Word 2000 or XP) is usually required for this purpose.

The whole process guarantees increased speed of operation since the tedious work in preparing language exercises are all borne by the computer word processor while also promoting the theory of learner-centred and learner autonomy. These tools can be relied upon by indigenous language learners.

The Internet Example in Language Teaching and Learning

Earlier in this paper, the Internet has been described as a computer-based global information exploration tool that works on the principle of networks and hence communication

of computers scattered all over the world. Its usage has brought so much relief in the way of language teaching and learning. Previous examples of Internet websites have already been discussed.

The use of Internet in language translation is perhaps one very important avenue of achieving language globalization. For example, by exploring a free language translation websites <http://www.freetranslation.com>, <http://babel.altavista.com>, it is possible to specify a pair of source and destination foreign languages to achieve a translation from one language to another. Indigenous languages can be included in this kind of translation exercises on the web.

Among other objectives that this kind of translation achieves in language learning, it may be used to “produce translations for analysis, syntactic, stylistic, cultural errors”, so that, “students use the software as an experimental tool and can input specific linguistic features (e.g. metaphors, ambiguous pronouns, eponymous adjectives) and draw conclusions ...” [3]. Thus, there is no doubt that analytical skills of indigenous language learners would be greatly improved if embraced.

Hyperstudio – A Case of Language Video Conferencing

This is one other viable and explorable area for the teaching of indigenous languages in Nigeria. With the experience of foreign languages, language video conferencing offers the ideal mix of language, sounds and visuals [10] – a multimedia ICT. With the advent of computer-network communications in the 1980s and 1990s, large numbers of people gained access to computers linked to telephone lines, allowing teachers and

students to communicate in conferences via computers.

Foreign Language teachers and learners have availed themselves of this great opportunity by making use of computer conferencing on the World Wide Web. This is where language teachers and students present text, pictures, audio, and occasionally video, and television pictures can also be transmitted in two directions simultaneously through telephone lines, so that teachers and students in one place can see and hear teachers and students in other places. This is called video-conferencing [12]. This obviously poses a great challenge for local language teaching and learning.

4. ICT Challenges for Local Language Teaching & Learning

A number of challenges are here for the utilization of multimedia ICT for local language teaching and learning. They have been grouped into three as follows.

Absence of Indigenous Languages Character Sets

It is a painful fact that veritable means of inputting characters of indigenous languages are clearly absent in the ICT world. Specifically, most computers understand only foreign language characters, because they were designed by these 'foreigners'; the English and French keyboards are examples. Therefore, ICT becomes nearly unusable for ordinary tasks of word processing in indigenous languages.

Although, it must be noted that Yoruba language character usage in ICT has received a boost with the Olamijulo-Okí's[13] NITDA Nigerian Keyboard Installation and usage tutorial, the fact remains that it is still difficult to use, since the keyboard is only an adaptation of the English keyboard. Worse still is the

fact that developers of other indigenous languages – Hausa and Igbo – are even more divergent in their efforts. Igbo language, for instance, is still be-deviled with discrepancies in writing some Igbo phrases [2]. This may make the design and development of e-dictionary in Igbo language unrealistic.

Therefore, the way forward is for researches to be instituted towards developing a true indigenous language keyboard (with indigenous language characters printed on it). Further, computer interpreter/translator software should be designed to create an interface with existing software in English language. These efforts would then create rooms for the development of e-dictionaries in major Nigerian languages.

Inadequate ICT Skills for Teachers and Learners

Grossly inadequate is the ICT skills of both indigenous language teachers and the learners, and these are likely issues to prevent them from using ICT [14]. There is no real effort to make the stakeholders feature in professional development ICT courses, the type conducted in most foreign nations where internet-based case studies are used to teach teachers and learners of language in resource utilization [15]. Further, is the fact that most of these teaching and learning facilities available to local language teachers and learners, are even written in foreign languages: for instance, there is no Igbo, Yoruba or Hausa software running on the internet to aid language. Bumi's [13] tutorial of using a 'Yoruba' keyboard is published in English Language on the Internet. These software coding in local languages are obvious challenges to ICT professionals.

Inadequate Infrastructure

Our major infrastructural problems in this country centre around inadequacy of power and telecommunication infrastructure. The phenomenon of 'alternate power supply' through the generators have come to stay with us because of the largely epileptic supply and distribution of electricity to consumers. It is needless to say therefore that a regular supply of electricity (not obtainable in this country) is critical to the use of multimedia ICT equipment needed for indigenous language teaching and learning.

Further, there is a very low level of access to communication facilities. The number of telephone lines in this country of 120 million people, have only just increased to about 5 millions [16] with a very large proportion of it used for only voice communication, not data. Therefore, percentage access to Internet services is still very low. If these problems are not addressed, high level applications of ICT in indigenous language teaching, for instance, video conferencing, would not be achievable.

5. Conclusion

The possible areas of applications of ICTs in the teaching and learning of indigenous languages have been discussed in this paper, drawing largely from the foreign language experience. A number of challenges which the Nigerian stakeholders must face in the desire to use ICTs for this purpose have also been exposed. For a proper integration of language systems in ICTs, professionals should brace up with the design of relevant multimedia language software, to resolve technical problems.

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6. Enhancing Language Teaching/Learning in Nigeria with ICTs: Network-Based Language Teaching as a Resource

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This paper commences with an introduction that assesses the development of language vis-à-vis communication and the resources development. It emphasizes the reason for the continued use of English Language as a language of wider communication (LWC). Section I evaluates language teaching and learning in line with the goals and objectives of this discipline with respect to the Nigerian indigenous languages. It highlights the perceived gap between the stated objectives and the achievement of these objectives, emphasizing the need for the use of Information Communications Technology (ICT). Section II examines how the changing perspectives on language teaching and learning have influenced the perspectives and use of the computer in the discipline. The immense benefits of ICT point to this media as a salvaging factor for the teaching and learning of Nigerian languages. Section III looks at Network-Based Language Teaching (NBLT) as a possible solution to the numerous problems besetting the teaching and learning of Nigerian indigenous language by demonstrating the use of this computer – mediated communications technology. This paper ends with recommendations and conclusion.

Introduction

In any developing or civilized society, the development of language determines the effectiveness of communication, which in turn determines the development of the human and material resources of that society. While English as a Second

Language (ESL) has developed for intra-national communication in the evolution of a socio-cultural variety, the Nigerian English (NE), the local languages cannot be said to be that successful. Although Nigeria is a multilingual, multiethnic nation, our multi-ethnicity has encouraged the use of English language in national communication which is why English remains the unifying factor. Any attempt to encourage the development of any of the numerous indigenous languages as a Language of Wider Communication (LWC) invites the fear of linguistic domination, which in turn generates a number of negative attitudes towards that language. This still makes English the safe option, but using a second language like English especially for about four decades now could have created an identity crisis for Nigerians but for the evolution of the socio-cultural (NE) variety, which has come to be distinctly associated with Nigerians because it expresses more vividly, the Nigerian socio-cultural worldview and experiences.

I

English language, now becoming a world lingua franca, endangers other languages that are not as widely used as English. This is what McArthur (2001) refers to as the 'fear of linguistic death'. A renowned Nigerian linguist (Bamgbose, 1991) has affirmed that a nation that fails to develop its indigenous languages cannot bring out the genius of its race and so cannot effect any meaningful development of its resources. One important reason for this can be attributed to the lack of a clearly formulated language policy. What we have is a language provision in the National Policy for Education (1981, 1988, 1998). As a result, the teaching of indigenous languages has not advanced beyond the level of literacy development. The situation does not have to remain

this way. Other countries like Japan, China and India have introduced their languages into the computer and have made it accessible and attractive not only to its native speakers but also the language learners. This is where the teaching and learning of Nigerian languages should be.

We accept the fact of language as functioning to define core similarities and differences. We also accept the fact that only education can ensure that such observed similarities and differences do not become a potential source of danger, particularly in a world where such linguistic differences are perceived as a very present source of danger (Brumfit, 1999). Language acquisition, whether it is first or second language, becomes pertinent here because it is relevant to the teaching and learning of Nigerian indigenous languages. The prospective students of Nigerian languages must have acquired the particular Nigerian language they wish to study, either as a first or a second language. A case in point is that of Urhobo students studying Yoruba at the College of Education Warri, mainly because they were born in the southwest region of the country and had their initial formal education there. Acquisition then, constitutes the domain where language learning and language teaching meet.

Teaching, however functions as the meeting point between language and education, and is made up of perceptions, motivations, attitudes, contexts and technical devices. A language-based communication therefore must have communication as its undisputable goal of language learning. The objective of language learning, on the other hand is (Kohn, 1992) "to promote and to develop socially adequate proficiency in communication" (P.5). If Nigerian indigenous languages are to achieve this objective, it is important to examine the ways in which the computer can affect an enhanced teaching of these languages. The first important step toward this is the investigation of general language learning

objectives. These will aid us in our proper assessment of the degree of enhancement to language teaching and learning afforded by the use of computers in Information Communications Technology (ICT) and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL).

We here examine the five objectives of language learning as outlined by Kohn (1995), vis-à-vis the learning of Nigerian indigenous languages. They are:

- (1) Acquisition and development of lexical and grammatical knowledge;
- (2) Sentence production and comprehension;
- (3) Acquisition and development of culture-bound world knowledge;
- (4) Comprehension and production of discourse in (simulated) communicative situations; and
- (5) Communication and interaction with others in social contexts.

The learning of Nigerian languages has strived to attain these objectives via the classroom teaching/learning and the acculturation program that goes with the study of such languages. Why then have our indigenous languages not attained the development we require of them – such development that could positively influence the development of communication, and by extension, our natural resources? Perhaps a cursory look at the *conditions* for language learning in general and whether these conditions are met in the learning of our indigenous languages might turn up some answers. Brumfit (1999) identifies three necessary conditions for language learning as follows:

- i) There must be some kind of exposure to the language;
- ii) There must be some kind of opportunity to interact,

- using the language; and
- iii) There must be motivation to take up the opportunity in the first place.

Now our indigenous languages may have met the first two conditions above, but the issue of motivation raises more questions than available answers. Students, who study Nigerian languages especially those not regarded as major or in wider use, do not do so out of a personal desire or any perceived motivation. They go into the discipline with a no-other-option attitude. They cannot see the utilitarian value of their discipline or the future prospects of a career. Some would even prefer to say they are studying 'linguistics' instead of a named indigenous language. This lack of pride in the discipline is not restricted to students. Recently, in one of the tertiary institutions in Delta State, some lecturers in the department of Nigerian Languages introduced themselves in the public as lecturers of Linguistics and have gone ahead to advocate changing the name of the department from 'Nigerian Languages' to 'Linguistics'. All these stem from a lack of motivation and a failure to see the relevance of the discipline for their present and their future.

Now, if we look at Kohn's (1998) condition for 'good' language learning, we would discover that these conditions are not possible to attain without the help of ICT. They are outlined as follows:

- (1) learner autonomy
- (2) communication embedded
- (3) targeted language learning
- (4) facilitation and tutoring
- (5) open pedagogic integration

If language learning for communication is to have utilitarian value, it must be cognitively and socially challenging. It is only then that motivation is aroused. It is then that technology and its application can become meaningful in the teaching and learning of our indigenous languages.

II

The use of ICT did not just happen on the language learning/teaching scene. It came about through the evolution of different perspectives on language learning and teaching. We had earlier in this paper observed that language acquisition is one domain that serves as the meeting point for both language learning and language teaching. In an attempt to better understand the language acquisition process, language teaching and learning as a discipline, had sought the help of linguistic, sociological and psychological theories. These theories provided a tool for the understanding and explanation of incidents in the acquisition process as well as the reasons for them. Each of the three theoretical perspectives – structural, cognitive and socio-cognitive – has influenced the application of computer technology in language teaching.

In the structural perspective, emphasis was on practice rather than abstract knowledge, which was a characteristic of the traditional methodology. With respect to the basic language skills, emphasis was on the end product rather than on the cognitive or social processes. In the cognitive/constructivist perspective, language learning was perceived as a process that generates and transforms knowledge rather than as a conditioned response of the audio-lingual method in the structural view. In the socio-cognitive perspective, language teaching is perceived as assisting students to participate in real-life situations they would come across

outside the four walls of the classroom. In this view, the focus of teaching writing skills also shifted from the development of strategies for the individual learner to that of teaching him/her how to communicate to specific audiences.

In a nation like Nigeria burdened with mass illiteracy, the literacy of the people in their indigenous languages remains an important factor for the development of language-based communication, which necessarily incorporates socio-cultural competence. With the shifts in perspectives on language learning and language teaching came changes in the perspectives on the use of the computer in language teaching and learning. From being seen as a tutor at its inception, the computer came to be seen as a pupil and later as a toolbox (Kern and Warschauer, 2000). The contribution of ICT to language learning and language teaching went back as early as the 1960s (Davies and Higgins, 1982; 1985).

Reiterating the immense contributions of computers to language teaching and language learning, Brumfit (1999) avers:

There are facilities being offered by information Technology (IT), which really do take us forward beyond what was available in the past. These facilities ... are drawing upon IT as a research tool but also are providing information (such as about the errors learners actually make) that can be fed into many teaching ... now available... (p. 3)

That the teaching and learning of Nigerian indigenous languages can benefit from ICT is an indisputable fact. Broncano and Ribeiro (1999) underscore this point when they affirm, “innovations in language teaching has come through the new technologies...” (p. 15) and that these can be beneficial to both students and teachers when integrated into the

educational process because “it increases the freedom of the individual in the language learning and teaching processes”. This is the same as the ‘learner autonomy’ that Kohn (1999) proposes as one of the conditions for ‘good’ language learning. It now becomes crystal clear that these new technologies not only enhance classroom interaction (an essential component of language learning), they also provide the language teacher with the luxury of less time on teacher-centered activities and more time on learner-centered activities (Mirescu, 1999). The result is that the language learner has more time to practice and develop his/her skills under the watchful and expert guidance of the language teacher. Although ICT cannot be said to have come of age in Nigeria, the level of awareness and use has become tremendously raised as witnessed by the use of the Internet and the mobile phones by Nigerians. What remains is the application of ICT to language learning and teaching.

III

The foregoing sections were to prepare the grounds for this section. It should have become clear by now that no meaningful progress can be achieved in the development of our indigenous languages for communication without the aid of ICT. In many Nigerian tertiary institutions, the use of the traditional media is yet to be fully implemented; at least not with half of the language laboratories in our tertiary institutions half-dead, if not completely dead. However, even in places where the traditional media have been fully implemented, it is important to state the difference between this media and the ICT. The language teacher using the traditional media is conversant with what the learner can gain through the combination of visual clues and the audio sound as contained in videos. He/she is also aware of the possibility

of adding a cultural perspective to the traditional media as it promotes the acquisition and development of culture-bound world knowledge.

These benefits do not, however, match those of the ICT. The uniqueness of ICT lies in its ability to incorporate what the language teacher has already known and used (i.e., print, audio, images, video) with electronic versions of a variety of media applications, which empower him/her to combine them for use. It is this characteristic of being multifaceted that makes ICT unique, although the 'facets' of the media are quite different from what the language teacher has been exposed to in the traditional media.

We now proceed to look at the NBLT as a form of CALL. NBLT, however, differs from CALL in its focus on human-to-human communication. Computer networking, which is what NBLT entails, provides the opportunity for a power packed extension of the use of computer as tool by facilitating access to other people, information and data (Kern and Warschauer, 2000). Two important technological and social developments were responsible for the emergence of computer networking in the classroom. These are:

- (1) Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC); and
- (2) Globally linked hypertext.

The focus here is on CMC, which provides the language learner with access to other learners or with the speakers of the target language. CMC therefore enables communication to take place on both a one-to-one basis and also on a one-to-many basis. The result is that the language teacher/student can share a message (long or short) with small groups or with a whole class. This encourages or facilitates communicative competence and collaborative reading and writing. How can NBLT be applied in the teaching and learning of Nigerian

languages? The networking of computers in NBTL can either be local or global. The focus here is on the local network. The very characteristics of ICT that make it unique also make NBTL ideal for our situation. These include:

- (1) *Text Flexibility*: This is a characteristic that confers on the learner/teacher the special ability to draft, review and revise a text.
- (2) *Flexibility of sound and Image*: The user can edit the audio, graphics and animations at his/her discretion.
- (3) *Media Mixing*: Multimedia documents, in contrast to the paper-based documents, consist of text, pictures, audio and video clips, which are able to create a conducive environment for activity creation for both the language teacher and language learner.
- (4) *Distribution of Documents*: Documents produced by the computer can be distributed either through a local or global network. There is the added advantage of the opportunity to edit documents distributed by both the sender and recipient. This feature makes it suitable for use in a language learning and teaching situation where students can have access to information sent by the language teacher, edit such documents according to the required learning task before sending them back to the language teacher.

Now, if NBLT were to be applied to the teaching of our indigenous languages, we would require about ten (10) computers in the classroom and one computer for the language teacher in his/her office. All these computers will be networked together for easy access to information as well as

for face-to-face communication.

The teacher of an indigenous language like Urhobo, Itsekiri, Izon or Isoko language, can for example, do any of the following in NBLT:

- (1) Send a picture or image to the language learners and require them to compose a text on the picture or image.
- (2) Using text manipulation to teach a range of reading, writing and listening sub-skills. This has the advantage of improving vocabulary acquisition and also the knowledge of the language learnt with regard to sentence structures.

For example, a language teacher can send the following picture or image and will expect a text composed on it:



Also, he or she can send a jumble of lines in a text and require the language learners to reorder the jumbled lines into a meaningful text. Here is an example of a text in three indigenous Nigerian languages presented in jumbled lines with the expectation of a text reordering:

Itsekiri

Ene ká lò elétríkì gbẹ́ urun gídíje mírèn sis firíjì, ukpaso bírí ujuàféré.

Ejú utukpà gidije owun ẹnẹ kaá lò ní àjà ẹnẹ.

Dí a ká mú eju tó àlè gbá ló urun ẹlétríkì, teri o maa bàjẹ wẹrẹ gbà jì oniyé.

Bòbò ninóghon káà se ùtùkpa olúgbó, ùtùkpa ekpo, ikándò bírí ùtùkpa elétríkì.

Urhobo

Ẹlẹtriki eranrwon buebun oyenevwo rue udje, okporho ohwahwa,

Igini avwọ kpa emwa kugbe odjo-odja rẹ oyibo

Eka re irhukpe sansan eyen ero vwe orho rẹ avwanre

Ofori evwo gbe ẹro vwiyotoesie ada vwe eranvwon nana vwo rue iruo, rere irwo jovwo

Emiovwo yere gbrighi ri vwo ayen

Evo usun rẹ irhukpe na, Evonrẹ orere oyen ede ru ayen -

Ochidiumokp- ikandol kugbe ẹlẹtriki.

Izon

Laitiriki womọ kọn firizimọ aiyonimọ ba aferi founyemo toniminì.

Bubọ- bubọ tukpa paama kì wo amabo a emi.

Laitiriki kọn olomięgha toniminimì eye kpọ seimomin kìri ba kìmì kpọ teinmìnì

Mìse tukpa pabo akpe tukpa kpọ emi, kandolumọ ba laitirikimọ.

Representing each sentence with a number, the jumbled text is presented in a 3-1-4-2 order and if the language learner

succeeds in the learning task of producing a coherent text by reordering, what the language teacher will have is a 1-2-3-4 order. The beauty of NBLT in this is that the language teacher can monitor the language learners simultaneously even as the learners have the opportunity to revise their work, compare answers with each other before sending the final draft to the teacher.

Recommendations and Conclusion

The teaching and learning of Nigerian languages can be said to still be in its infancy. In order to make communication language-based, and in order to develop our local languages and our national resources, the teaching and learning of our local languages must embrace the use of ICT. The NBLT offers one such opportunity for improved language teaching and learning in Nigeria. It also provides motivation for learning these languages where there had been none. This paper demonstrates how NBLT can employ text manipulation as a resource in the teaching of our local languages. The paper also demonstrates the characteristics of experimentation and creativity which are useful learning strategies and both of which NBLT offers.

Although computer-based activities have the advantage of always looking fresh irrespective of when those activities were created, the use of computers for NBLT are not without limitations. Some of these are:

- (1) Absence of some Nigerian indigenous alphabet characters in the computer (producing this paper, especially the texts on local languages, was an uphill task).
- (2) Lack of provision of computers in the classrooms of our tertiary institutions.

This paper therefore proposes that, for NBLT to be successfully used for the teaching and learning of our local languages, the following recommendations should be adopted:

- (1) Provision of authentic Nigerian alphabet characters in the computers for use in tertiary institutions.
- (2) Training of teachers of Nigerian languages in the applications of computer software.
- (3) Provision of sufficient computers for networking purposes.
- (4) Encouragement of computer program experts to develop computer programs for Nigerian languages.
- (5) Encouragement of computer software manufacturers to produce software on text manipulation adaptable for use in the teaching and learning of any of our local languages.

The foregoing may appear to be a daunting task especially if we look at the cost; but then taking a giant leap requires courage, will and determination. The journey of a thousand kilometers begins with a step. Only the use of ICT can take the teaching and learning of our indigenous languages out of its present doldrums.

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7. Globalisation and the Vanishing Voices of Africa: Any Glimmer of Hope at this Turbulent Sea?*

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The major pre-occupation of the main actors in international politics since the last quarter of the last century has been to transform the whole world into a small 'global village', so that there will be a considerable reduction in the barriers between people, cultures and traditions. This phenomenon has been described as globalisation. The belief is that globalisation will not only produce new ways of thinking about everything, but will also help to "bridge the geographical, social and economic gaps that currently exist in access to communication" (UNFPA 1995:18). The main concern of the paper is to see to what extent globalisation encourages or fails to encourage linguistic diversity, with particular focus on Africa.

Introduction

Giddens (1990: 64) defines globalisation as "... the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa." According to Okwudishu (2003:1 ff Toolan 2000), "globalisation requires as well as produces new channels, networks and practices of communication which are not dependent on geographical proximity". Giddens (1991: 22) is of the view that

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... globalisation has to be understood as a dialectical phenomenon, in which events at one pole of a distanced relation often produce divergent or even contrary occurrences at another. The dialectic of the local and global is a basic emphasis of the arguments employed... Globalisation means that, in respect of the consequences of at least some disembedding mechanisms, no one can 'opt out' of the transformations brought about by modernity.

There is the belief that globalisation has the power to transform global society for the better and to liberate human beings, wherever they live. Globalisation has been propelled mainly by two developments: first, the enormous and amazing advances in information and communications technologies (ICTs); second, the rise of neoliberal economic model, emphasizing free trade and the removal of restrictions on cross-border investment, and its progressive acceptance by many unsuspecting or naïve governments. In the words of Ogwezzu (2003:359),

... advancements in ICTs have led to massive and exponentially growing access to Internet, resulting in a proliferation of global communication links unprecedented in world history, which make it possible to reach far and wider targets than in the past ...

Globalisation has reduced transaction costs of international commerce, so that the global economy is becoming more and more integrated. Business now increasingly operates in global markets not only for products, but also for corporate control. National boundaries in business organizations are increasingly being dismantled.

The glamorous concept 'globalisation' has, however, been under serious attack recently. There are critics who believe that globalisation is responsible for the widening gap between the world's rich and poor, and the destruction of local systems. There are some others who claim that globalisation does not ally itself imaginatively to the world's aspirations to extinguish poverty and oppression, to preserve the environment, to achieve cultural and spiritual fulfilment. They are rather of the view that globalisation is continuously destroying the local environment and eroding the distinct national cultures and the ways of life through cultural imperialism. In fact, scholars like Derefaka (2003) are of the view that globalisation is nothing more than "the current face of an old historical process from the point of view of those who have been colonized before". Maduka (2003:3) has also criticized the whole concept of globalisation where he says that the world is not a global village "in the sense that the spirit of mutual respect governs the running of world affairs". He clearly states that the champions of globalisation ignored Africa in the scheme of events, and that what globalisation has achieved is to make "Africa a cultural satellite of Europe".

Khor (2003:1) summaries the negative effects of globalisation in the following words:

- lack of tangible benefits to most developing countries from opening their economies, despite the well-publicized claims of export and income gains;
- the economic losses and social dislocation that are being caused to many developing countries by rapid financial and trade liberalisation;
- the growing inequalities of wealth and opportunities arising from globalisation, and
- the perception that environmental, social and cultural

problems have been made worse by the workings of the global free-market economy.

On Globalisation and Linguistic Imperialism

Although proponents of globalisation have continued to emphasize its benefits to the human race, particularly as it concerns increased access to information and knowledge, there has been the legitimate fear that globalisation portends danger to cultural and linguistic diversity of the peoples of this earth. The benefits of ICTs are available in the languages of the super powers, especially English, French, Spanish and Portuguese.

Of all world languages today, English has become the most attractive. On the internet, information on major events and discoveries in science and technology is available in English. Everywhere in the world, people clamour to learn to speak English as the language of the new information age. The consequence of this is that English has become a predator language which is steadily consuming other tongues, particularly in the former colonies of Britain. It is reported that every 24 hours, at least one language dies somewhere in the world, and that two-thirds of these deaths occur in the African continent.

The relevance of English in global communication is not that it is the easiest language to learn; again, it is not that English has the simplest grammar. In fact, the syntax of English is utterly perplexing; its phonology is a puzzle, its spellings - a nightmare. If these are facts about English, why do people still struggle to learn the language? The answer to this is simple. For a language to become internationally valuable and attractive, it has to be backed by political, economic and technological power. Ancient Greek and Latin, for instance, did not survive for too long when the powers holding them collapsed. The number of speaking a language

as their mother-tongue does not matter, but the power behind the language does. English is enjoying the economic, political and military might of the United States of America. The dominance of English in today's global communication is summarized in the following statement credited to Fulgence (2003:14):

Language is like any other living organism. As such, it follows the rules of any other living organism namely starting, living, growing older and finally dying or changing into something different.

The fortunes of a language are tied to the fortunes of its speakers. When a people become important, their language also becomes important, and people for whom the language is not their mother-tongue will struggle to learn it for obvious reasons. People do not learn a language other their mother-tongue because of the euphony of sounds of the alien language. They do so because of the communicative value of the new language to their overall survival. No matter how complex the grammar of the alien language is, people will struggle to learn the language, if there are certain economic or political benefits inherent in such an endeavour.

African Languages in Global Communication

It is no gainsaying that language is closely associated with economic prosperity of any human society. All developed nations of the world did realise, at some point in their evolution, the importance of participatory and all-inclusive common means of communication in their ability to positively affect the fortunes of the citizenry. They clearly understand the vital role of language in the acquisition of life-long skills and in any sensible transformation agenda. They therefore

place language second to none in their educational system to drive the desired transformation in vital sectors of their economy.

It is a fact that no country can develop without industrialisation through science and technology. But the bitter truth is that science and technology cannot create the desired impact if only a minute fraction of the population of the nation can read and write in the language which serves as the medium of imparting the knowledge of science and technology. It has also been proven that children perform better in school if they are taught in a language they are in full control of. This experience has been reported severally by experts in various countries. Many developed nations have given amazing testimonies regarding the role of their languages in their educational systems and in their overall economic prosperity.

Prah (1995:45-46) captures the relevance of the mother-tongue or the language that the majority is in firm control of in scientific and technological development, as follows:

... concepts, abstract notions and scientific linguistics tools are most accessible and provide greater facility for effective usage if they are grounded in the language which provides the systematic grid for interpreting and intervening in reality. Scientific practice is the mode of this intervention. It is mother tongue which affords room for the creative application of human ingenuity. In all developed societies, science and technological development is based on the native language, cultivated as the mother tongue”.

Speaking on the relevance of the mother-tongue in technological transfer, Egbokhare (2011:38), quotes Pyrah (1995:49) as stating that

... knowledge cannot remain a culturally indigested foreign body of ideas. Knowledge must melt into the cultural landscape of the user in order to become an instrument of creativity for the learner and user.

The implication of the foregoing is captured in the adage which saying "Distance hoses do not put out the fire; local efforts do".

The secrets of great empires are preserved in their languages, and that is why deliberate efforts are made by individuals and groups from other nations to learn languages of the industrialised nations, so as to tap into the secrets of their greatness. At various stages in human history, different languages have played key roles in civilizations, attracting special interest from non-natives to desire to learn them. Let us mention, Greek, Latin, French, English, Mandarin Chinese, Hindi, Arabic, etc., as few examples. In all the situations known to man, language has remained the vehicle with which civilisations are conveyed.

Let us now return home to Africa. Sadly enough, no African language (not even Kiswahili) qualifies to be ranked amongst the first one hundred (100) most important world languages. There are parameters for this evaluation, including the desire to learn them by people from other linguistic backgrounds because of the economic values attached to learning them.

As we said earlier, quoting Fulgence (2003), a language

grows or dies with the fortunes of its speakers. If a people become important, their language invariably becomes important and people from other linguistic groups will aspire to learn it. But the importance of a nation depends largely on how they grow their language to combat the challenges inhibiting their progress. Show me a nation in affluence and I will tell you a language that is being sought after by people of other nations. Look at the recent craze for Mandarin Chinese, for instance.

The prime implication of the foregoing statement is that people do not learn languages for the sake of acquiring an additional tongue. There are communicative as well as economic motives that propel people to learn new languages. I like this quotation from Crystal (2000) whenever I talk about learning an additional language. It reads thus: "Flash dollar bills before the cripple and he will climb the Everest". In fact, there are no motivating "dollar bills" woven around any African language. No African language is a conveyor of any advanced technology; there are no secrets of greatness in inventions coded in any of them. None is the language of communication and information super-highway. They are merely carriers of neglected and severely endangered cultures. Many of them are at the verge of ultimate death with little or no written literature in and about them. Many of them are steadily losing children speakers and therefore may not be handed down to the next generation. More than two-thirds of African languages have no orthography. Their vocabularies, to say the least, are grossly inadequate to cope with the communicative needs of their speakers in an ever-rapidly changing world. It hurts to say that no African language is attracting any global attention. Presently, African languages

cannot compete in the global rat race.

It is reported that every hour a language dies somewhere in the world and thirds of these deaths are recorded in Africa. The painful thing about language death is that it also entails cultural death. The death of a language marks the end of a civilization. Unlike tangible material culture whose fossils are recoverable from archeological sites for preservation, linguistic evidence does not have such luck. The death of a language is the demise of an entire empire.

Africa's own linguistic Armageddon has become. The way things are going, most of their languages cannot survive this century. Their mother-tongues are vanishing. Before our eyes, predators are steadily eaten up their languages (whether the large, the medium or the small tongues). There are no exceptions; and that is why some scholars have stated that all African languages are at various stages of endangerment. Some are fairly endangered; some are severely endangered; some are moribund and others are dead.

All African languages are steadily losing children speakers; the minority ones to medium and large linguistic groups around them or to a colonial language prevalent in the area (in all its forms) or its pidgin, the large ones are losing speakers to a colonial (in all its forms) or its pidgin. A time shall come when many Africans will have no competence (not even oracy) in any human language. Just imagine the frustration of man without language. We are already witnessing this in our classrooms. The students in this category are usually moody and do not participate in interactive class sessions which are required in any effective language class. For such students, learning in a formal situation is impossible no matter the pedagogical

maneuvering adopted by the teacher. The implication of all these is that Africa has begun to raise children who are uneducable because they possess no language, the basic tool to acquire knowledge.

Globalisation and Tragedy of African Languages

In every African country, a non-indigenous language serves as the official language for public interaction. The official language for any African country is either English, French or Portuguese, depending on the colonial history of a particular country. Since the period of colonialism when the imperial languages were introduced into different countries of Africa, the local languages have been under severe threat. The domain of communication of some of these languages has remained the immediate community of its users, with little or no opportunity to use them beyond the home.

In almost all nations of Africa, the colonial languages have continued to serve as the media of instruction in schools, so that the children from Africa have little or no opportunity to be exposed to initial literacy via their mother-tongue. This practice does not only mean the denial of the child's right (as has been noted by UNESCO), but also a wholesome impoverishment of the child.

A language is more than just a tool of communication ... It is a channel of values, traditions and cultures. A language is a whole way of looking at reality, at life (Fulgence 2003:14).

There are some expressions, deep feelings and strong sentiments that are hard to express in a language other than the native one.

For more than half a century now, African nations have

been battling with the imposition of non-indigenous African languages in the educational system. The situation seems to be orchestrated by globalisation and the overwhelming presence of the imperial languages in the ICTs. African languages and their native speakers now live in a more intense and harsh linguistic environment. Access to technological information is via an imperial language, particularly English, French, or Spanish. No African language is enjoying this rare privilege. Hence African languages are relegated to the background. The consequence of this is that more than one-third of African languages will die before the first quarter of this century, as their domain of use continues to dwindle.

The ultimate target of globalisation is to reduce the world to a global village, and possibly to return humanity to Babel where one or two languages will dominate international communication. We are not afraid about 'this return to Babel'. What is particularly disturbing is how the surviving language(s) can be used for the good of all. What will be the role or contribution of Africa to the surviving 'monster'? How many African languages will participate in the new information age? How many African languages will survive the envisaged global linguistic Armageddon? These are issues that Africanists must address. Our major worry, however, is that the champions of globalisation are blind to its impact on local communities, their languages and cultures. They are blind to the casualties and deaf to social concerns. What matters is that globalisation has strong, deep-seated juicy economic implications for the super powers. The current 'digital divide' between the developed and the developing nations of the world is a welcome development for the proponents of globalisation. The fact remains that globalisation does not target at how to help the poorest and most excluded people in the world. It is a global politics of survival of the fittest. It is a deadly rat race, to say the least!

Concluding Remarks

So far we have given a brief account of the impacts of globalisation on African languages. We have clearly stated that Africans and African languages live in a harsh linguistic environment, and that if no deliberate and urgent steps are taken to check the situation, more than one-third of African languages will be devoured by the predator languages of Europe. What can be done?

1. Africans must cherish, and therefore struggle to preserve their languages. They must realise that their languages represent more than just tools for communication; they are part of their common heritage.
2. African leaders must struggle to transform the continent economically and technologically, and make it a force to reckon within international politics. When the continent begins to take giant strides in science and technology, obviously it must attract genuine global attention. There is no gainsaying that the achievements of African nations will certainly rub off on their languages, in terms of people of other nations wanting to speak some of the languages because of the economic and political rewards accruing therefrom. As we said earlier, when a people become important, their language also becomes important.
3. African nations must formulate aggressive and implementable language policies that will encourage the learning and use of African languages.

Finally, our worries are genuine enough and represent a serious issue for policy makers to address.

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8. Language & Globalisation: Options for Africa*

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Language is crucial for communication and transactions in the global market. Buying and selling of goods and services, as well as the propagation of ideology can only be facilitated by the use of languages which have a wider reach. English, French, and Arabic are among the dominant languages of the global village. But many African countries have not been able to evolve or develop indigenous national or regional languages for the expression of the 'Voice of Africa' in the global context. They have always relied on the languages of their colonial masters. The main objectives of this paper, however, are to: (i) highlight the adverse effects of globalisation, especially on African languages; and (ii) critically examine the options which are considered viable for the inclusion of the 'Voice of Africa' in global affairs.

Introduction

The conception and implementation of globalisation entail dichotomies such as 'privileged' versus 'under-privileged', 'dominant' versus 'marginal', 'active' versus 'passive' participants or nations. The glaring imbalance in the system explains the clamour for *a fair globalisation*, a position which the United Nations General Assembly adopted in December

2004. Privileged or dominant participants in the global village are apparently willing to make certain concessions ostensibly to correct the imbalance, and perhaps to facilitate *a fully inclusive and equitable globalisation*. For instance, aids and grants are usually given to the marginal, under-privileged nations. But there is a particular concession which they cannot grant, and that is the question of language which is also a critical aspect of culture. It is not an accident that African countries today rely almost solely on the languages of their colonial masters for wider communication intra- and internationally. The numerous problems facing Africa (economic, political, cultural, etc.) have been adequately documented; and for issues concerning language and culture, the works of Mazrui (1975), Prah (1995 & 2001), Chumbow (1990 & 1998), Bamgbose (2000), Mufwene (2003), Egbokhare (2004), and Wright (2004) are very informative (see also UNESCO 1953 & 1966; Surakat 1992, 2001 & 2004; NEPAD 2001; Bodunde 2004; etc.).

The reality today is that Africa (or any continent for that matter) cannot afford the luxury of being excluded from global affairs as a result of 'language deficit'. The pertinent questions, therefore, are: How do we ensure the linguistic inclusion of Africa in the global context without necessarily sacrificing our own identity? What are the gains and pains of adopting or adapting languages such as English, French and Arabic? How can we plan for, and develop regional or sub-regional lingua-francas such as Swahili and Pidgin? What practical steps can be taken to protect indigenous African languages and culture from extinction? And what is the role of

the translation enterprise in all the above? In essence, the paper, using a critical linguistic approach, goes beyond the level of popular sentiments and rhetoric by proffering practicable measures for the inclusion of the 'Voice of Africa' in global matters. Of course, the critical issue is not the dearth of suggestions, but the WILL and commitment to execute or implement the various recommendations proposed. As will be demonstrated in the ensuing discourse, this is a great challenge to African leaders and peoples.

What is Globalisation?

Several attempts have been made to define or explain globalisation, and Scholte (2000) provides a good summary of the five most popular positions, the overlap between them notwithstanding. First, globalisation has been equated with *internationalization*; "cross-border relations between countries" or "growth of international exchange and interdependence" (Scholte 2000:15; see also Hoogvelt 1997:131). Second, globalisation has been conceived in terms of *liberalization*; "... a process of removing government-imposed restrictions on movements between countries in order to create an 'open', borderless world economy" (Scholte 2000:15-16). 'Open-market', 'deregulation', 'privatization' and other politico-economic 'structural adjustment' programmes imposed on Africa are a reflection of liberalization. Third, globalisation has been associated with *universalisation*; "a planetary synthesis of cultures" or a "process of spreading objects and experiences to people in all corners of the earth". "A fourth definition has equated globalisation with *westerni-*

zation or *modernization* especially in an 'Americanised' form.... Following this idea, globalisation is a dynamic whereby the social structures of modernity... are spread the world over, normally destroying pre-existent cultures and local self-determination in the process" (Scholte 2000:16). By implication, globalisation has antecedents in Africa in the forms of colonization or imperialism, neo-colonisation, and so on (see also Khor 1995, Ling 2000). The fifth describes globalisation as *detrterritorialisation* or 'a spread of supra-territoriality' which "entails a reconfiguration of geography so that social space is no longer wholly mapped in terms of territorial places,...distances... and borders" (Scholte 2000:16).

Robertson (1992) has viewed globalisation at the cultural level in terms of 'compression of the world' which 'intensifies global consciousness' through technological advancements in mass communication and transportation. Along this line, Harvey (1989) and Giddens (1990) also respectively discussed *Time-Space Compression*, and *Time-Space Distantiation*. "The organisation of space defines relationships not only between activities, things and concepts, but by extension between people" (Hoogvelt 1997:118). In the words of Scholte (2000:46) "A reconfiguration of social space has far-reaching significance. After all, space is one of the primary dimensions of social relations. Geography ranks on a par with culture, ecology, economy, politics and psychology as a core determinant of social life." He then adds that "the spatial contours of a society strongly influence the nature of production, governance, identity, and community... and vice versa. For example, differences between the lives of desert

nomads, mountain villagers and island seafarers are largely attributable to contrasts in the places that they inhabit." In conclusion, he states that "... if the character of society's map changes, then its culture, ecology, economics, politics and social psychology are likely to shift as well".

Time and space are sources of value and power. Moreover, time determines the value of money as observable in capitalist economies where interest rates are calculated as 'the time value of money'. Satellite television, the Internet linking computers through cyberspace, mobile phones, Fax, video-conferencing, aircrafts and so on have facilitated the shrinking of the world to a global village. Within the context of 'deterritorialisation', this implies a virtual 'annihilation of space through time'; which makes Giddens (1990:64) to define globalisation as "the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles (or kilometers) away and vice versa" (see also Hoogvelt 1997:120). It must be appreciated that in the current world order, it is usually the dominant, privileged, and advantaged nations or participants that are able to influence (positively or negatively) the marginal, underprivileged and disadvantaged members of the so-called global village. Aspects of material culture (e.g. fashion, automobiles, electronics, etc.) as well as non-material culture (e.g. capitalist ideology, western democracy, gay-culture, etc.) flow easily from the developed world to Africa much more than African culture penetrate the advanced countries.

How Old or New is Globalisation?

When did it start, and how has it developed? Some scholars have argued that globalisation has a long history, but the positions of Robertson (1992) and Scholte (2000) are relevant here. Robertson (1992:58-59) states that globalisation had a 'germination phase', that is "between the early fifteenth and mid-eighteenth centuries, and a 'take-off' period from the middle of the nineteenth century". 'Incipient globalisation' was between the 1850s and 1950s, while 'full-scale globalisation' started from 1950s up to the present (Scholte 2000). How has Africa been involved or affected since the 15th century? Africa was explored by non-Africans; Africans were taken away as slaves to work on plantations outside Africa. From agrarian revolution to industrial revolution and the rise of capitalism, some form of globalisation transpired. The 19th century witnessed the scramble for Africa which culminated in the Berlin Conference and the partitioning of Africa by the imperialists. Missionary activities in Africa and colonial rule were also in the spirit of globalisation. The exploitation of Africa under the guise of 'legitimate trade' - whereby agricultural produce and mineral resources were taken away from Africa at prices determined by the 'masters' - was part of globalisation. Nationalist struggles for self-rule started yielding results from the late 1950s up to the 1970s when most of the colonized countries gained independence. But neo-colonisation of the post-independence period was a continuation of globalisation, and it has since intensified such that Africa has now embraced globalisation, albeit as a passive, marginalized, and disadvantaged participant.

Globalisation, Justice and Equity

Globalisation promotes injustice and inequity as discernable from the uneven incidence between countries, classes, gender, and so on. For instance, with respect to class, it can be argued that globalisation favours the rich and affluent. The middle class has virtually been wiped off in many African countries. "Income gaps have grown in almost every country as wealthy circles have taken a lion's share of the benefits from globalisation". Moreover, globalisation has been described as "... a post-colonial imperialism that has not only reinvigorated the exploitation of the South by the North, but also added former communist-ruled areas to the list of victims" (Scholte 2000:29). Gender and racial injustices have also been alleged against globalisation. Similarly, rural peoples are more disadvantaged compared to urban dwellers. For instance, development projects are often concentrated in the urban areas, and when they ever go to the rural areas, peasants have their lands confiscated with little or no compensation. Usually the peasants migrate to the urban slums or engage in some odd, menial jobs (see also Scholte 2000: 29-30).

Apologists of liberal globalisation have argued (almost blindly) that globalisation is a blessing to humanity, and have cited several advantages associated with it. However, the main objective here is to identify some of the ills of globalisation as they affect African languages in particular, and recommend measures to address the ills. It goes without saying that culture, politics and economy are interrelated and interdependent, but emphasis here is on culture, particularly

the linguistic aspect of it. In the course of globalisation, African languages and cultures have been marginalized while the languages and cultures of the imperialists have been elevated. Numerous African languages are endangered and facing the threats of extinction. Many African leaders and governments are under the tutelage of the Western powers and former colonialists, even with the transition from military dictatorship to Western-type democracy. African economies are under the control of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organisation, and so on, which prescribe bitter economic pills of structural adjustment, trade liberalization, privatization, currency devaluation, withdrawal of subsidies, and many more. Many Africans are swallowing the American or Western cultures 'hook, line and sinker' even where they do not fit our context – all in the name of globalisation or civilization.

It can be argued that globalisation is largely responsible for all forms of insecurity in most parts of Africa – war and violence, starvation and hunger, ecological degradation, environmental disasters, unemployment, child trafficking, drug addiction, Internet fraud and scam, gambling, lesbianism, money laundering, and so on. In essence, globalisation has deepened socio-cultural, economic and political subjugation of Africa. It undermines cultural and intellectual security, just as it promotes linguistic and cultural imperialism of global communication. It has been argued, and progressive African intellectuals should be seriously concerned, that:

... the resultant loss of cultural resources (especially language) is not only tragic in its own right, but also limits the capacities of human kind to respond creatively and effectively to political, ecological and economic challenges (Scholte 2000:28).

What Strategies can be Adopted?

What can Africans do to minimise the negative effects of globalisation? Three major approaches have been advocated, *viz.* the neo-liberal, reformist, and radicalist perspectives. Neo-liberalism is like a modern wine in an ancient bottle; a new line on an old story. It borrows from the ideas of John Locke and Adam Smith by advocating *laissez-faireism*, the principle of non-intervention by state in economic affairs so that everything is left to market forces. Neo-liberalism is usually regarded as the orthodox approach by the 'dominant participants' because it favours them, and it is the easiest to implement. The dominant players in the global game also get support from conservative academics, and many African leaders to promote neo-liberal globalisation. What the neo-liberals always conceal, or pretend not to know in their position, is the fact that there are crucial humanistic features which market forces often ignore. If the welfare of the people, and the determinant of the 'human essence' (i.e. language) can be sacrificed on the altar of 'open market', then there is no justification for globalisation where a privileged few shall perpetually have the powers and 'right' to oppress the majority.

Reformism is basically a Keynesian strategy; the need for a

welfare state which promotes social justice; the clamour for state measures to steer globalisation in progressive directions. United Nations organs advocate reformism. For instance, as far back as 1995, Boutrous-Ghali, the then United Nations Secretary-General warned against “globalisation without control”. The UNDP, ILO, international NGOs, and (ironically) the World Bank, also pursue reforms to alleviate the consequences of globalisation on disadvantaged social circles. Various academics and journalists subscribe to reformism, although the approach is today not as powerful as it used to be in the 1980s (see also Scholte 2000:35-36). However, the relevant positive aspects of reformism can be invoked and reinvigorated for pragmatic purposes in relation to the issues at stake (i.e. redressing the negative consequences of globalisation on African languages and cultures, etc.).

Radicalists perceive globalisation as harmful to humanity and should, therefore, be reversed or uprooted so that the world can return to the good old pre-global state. Radicals who advocate de-globalisation include traditionalists, and religious extremists who strongly believe in a return to pre-global *status quo ante*. But there are also proactive radicals who believe that the solution “... is not to reverse globalisation, but to continue it on different foundations. Proactive radicals charge that reformist strategies are inadequate, since they fail to address the deeper structural causes of the ills of contemporary globalisation”. Global socialists, and post-modernists promote “... trans-world movements of workers, women and other oppressed persons as a way to achieve a post-capitalist world that is free of social exploitation”. It

should be pointed out that the hard-core radical approach to overturning globalisation has generally "... attracted much weaker followings than neo-liberalism and reformism" because it is "... at present intellectually under-developed and politically impracticable" (see also Scholte 2000: 37-39).

Suggested Strategy

The strategy adopted in this paper, however, is more of reformism. This is considering the fact that neo-liberalism is inherently inadequate, and unfavourable to Africa, while extreme radicalism is almost utopian, or simply unrealistic. But then, it is possible to blend, in varying degrees, certain aspects of the reformist and radical perspectives. The following are the basic hypotheses upon which the proposed solutions are premised:

- a) Globalisation is a process, not an end-state of affairs. This on-going process which is orchestrated mainly by capitalist super-powers can be debated, challenged and changed, in the interest of the disadvantaged circles (see also Scholte 2000:9; Hoogvelt 1997:131);
- b) Whatever happens to societies as a result of globalisation "depends largely on whether and how national governments resist the process or go along with it. This in turn depends largely on a correct identification of, and policy response to, the key elements of globalisation" (Hoogvelt 1997:131), and
- c) Language and cultural policies can be designed and implemented to counteract the negative effects of

globalisation on African languages and cultures. The success of the measures, however, depends on determination, dedication, commitment and POLITICAL WILL by African leaders and peoples.

Language Situation in Africa, and the Policy Options

Potency of Language

Language, if properly harnessed and utilized, has positive roles to play in the following ways:

- (i) Cognitive and intellectual development of man; which explains the need for Mother Tongue Education from childhood (see also UNESCO 1953; and Bodunde 2004);
- (ii) Popular, mass participation in democratic governance which in turn promotes unity and sense of belongingness, patriotism etc.; which explains the need for National Language.
- (iii) Expression of innermost feelings, and viewpoints in concrete terms both locally and internationally; an advantage enjoyed by some privileged participants in the global village who easily express their ideologies/cultures to influence others.

Language is also one of the most enduring artifacts of culture, a vehicle for cultural expression. In essence, language is crucial to any national (and even international) development drive (see also Bamgbose 1992:7; Chumbow 1998:21; Egbokhare 2004:2). It is the same within the context of globalisation. There are about 6,800 languages in the World

with 2011 of them spoken in Africa. Nigeria alone has over 400 (Hansford et al 1976). Unfortunately, most African countries have not been able to evolve or develop NATIONAL LANGUAGES of their own. Instead, they rely on the languages of their colonial masters such as English and French. The Nigerian example can serve to illustrate the negative consequences of linguistic imperialism, while the potentials in East Africa is used to demonstrate how we can plan for sub-regional integration by using a common language.

Language Situation in Nigeria

Of the 449 languages in Nigeria, just about ten per cent (or 44) have been reduced to writing (Emenanjo 1990; cf. Hansford, et al. 1976). In actual fact, the design of orthographies for Nigerian languages was mainly through the initiative of Missionaries and the colonial masters. This has, however, been complimented by some government agencies and language societies. The point still remains that more needs to be done to design and standardize the spelling systems of many more indigenous African/Nigerian languages.

Similarly, in spite of the advantages of the Mother Tongue Education policy, most Nigerian languages have not been developed for the teaching of primary school children. Some of the impediments include: inadequate trained teachers, and textual materials such as primers, grammar books, dictionaries, and so on. The problems are many, but not insurmountable (see also UNESCO 1953; Chumbow 1990; Surakat 1992; etc.).

The National or Federal, as well as the 36 state legislative houses still rely heavily on English for their deliberations and activities. Although provisions are made for the use of indigenous languages in the legislative houses, little or no efforts are being made to accommodate Nigerian languages, even in the policy and law-making processes.

All attempts to develop a National Language have been thwarted mainly by ethnic sentiments, and fear of domination. Simpson (1978), Olagoke (1982) and Ikara (1987), among others, have suggested Hausa (one of the three 'major' languages) but this position seems unacceptable to some people including Chinua Achebe. Proposals for the use of one of the 'minority' languages (e.g. Igala; see Sofunke, 1990), and an artificial language GUOSA designed by an 'Esperantist' called Igbineweka (Elugbe, 1990) have also failed. The suggestion for the use of a popular language, the Nigerian Pidgin (which is more or less a neutral language) has equally yielded no dividends.

One serious implication of this state of affairs is the inability of Nigerian governments to mobilise for national development the vast majority of its citizens who do not speak or understand English. In addition, those citizens are denied the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. The spirit of patriotism is lost as a consequence, while the concept of exclusion is engendered. This is antithetical to our national aspirations and development objectives. If the Nigerian President wants to make a national broadcast, he uses only English. If the National Assembly is in session, it is in English. If a minister wants to address the people, it is in

English. Yet over 70% of the population is illiterate in English (Elugbe 1990:10; cf. Bamgbose 1983:5). Only a few indigenous languages enjoy the 'privilege' of translation from English such that the illiterate populace get to have an idea of policy issues (see also Surakat 1988).

The Mother Tongue Education policy which UNESCO advocated as far back as the 1950s is being poorly implemented in Nigeria. Children are supposed to be taught in the language of their experience in order to harness their full potentials for development. But what obtains today is that most children are neither fluent in the local languages nor proficient in English. In most cases, there is a 'disconnect' between the home language and the medium of instruction in schools. This has serious implications on children's cognitive and intellectual development.

Some 'privileged' Nigerian languages are "swallowing" other smaller ones with the implication that many indigenous languages now face the threat of extinction which is bound to destroy the viable cultural basis for our development (see also Okwudishu 1986; Munzali 1990; and Egbokhare 2004). Unfortunately, little or no efforts are being made to document these dying/fading/endangered languages.

Suggestions

There is a great need for Nigeria to redouble her efforts at LINGUISTIC ENGINEERING which according to Capo (1990:1) "is that domain of applied linguistics concerned with the design and implementation of strategies (i.e. conscious and deliberate steps) toward the rehabilitation and optimal

utilization of individual languages;... a mechanism of language planning that recognizes problems and proceeds to 'engineer' solutions to such problems". In essence, there is a great need for codification, standardization, modernization, development and reform of as many Nigerian languages as possible. The various geo-political, ethnic and cultural segments of Nigeria should be taken into consideration in the selection of the languages. No cost is too high for proper linguistic engineering in Nigeria in view of the long-term advantages that will accrue.

It is important to devise optimal and comprehensive orthographic systems for Nigerian languages and dialects, so that they can be used for documentation, education, mass mobilization, etc. It is commendable that about 44 out of the over 400 Nigerian languages now have standardized orthography, but more still needs to be done. In other words, there is room for improvement and consolidation. Government agencies (e.g. Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, NERDC; and National Institute for Nigerian Languages, NINLAN; etc.), Language Associations, Local Communities, corporate bodies, and so on have a role to play in this and related endeavours (see also Emenanjo 1990:89-91).

There is a need to expand the lexicons of the languages through borrowing, compounding, back formation, clipping, blending, coinage/neologism, derivation, and such other morphological processes so that the languages can effectively meet the challenges of the moment - Science and technology, medium of instruction in schools, parliamentary discourse,

philosophy, and so on. It is true that **metalanguage** has been developed for a few Nigerian languages, but again there is room for improvement. These compilations should not remain locked up in drawers or be allowed to gather dusts on book shelves. They should be publicized and utilized to achieve the desired objectives. And more languages should also benefit from such compilations.

Primers, grammar books, and literary works need to be produced in the various languages for use in the conventional schools and for adult literacy classes which are better conducted in the indigenous languages. Similarly, monolingual as well as bilingual lexicons or dictionaries should be compiled in as many Nigerian languages as possible. It is equally important to conduct more studies on, and empirical research into Nigerian languages. As of now, only a few languages enjoy this advantage, especially the three official major languages (i.e. Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba). Developing and standardizing these languages should involve experts from different fields, and disciplines; and should not be left in the hands of politicians and bureaucrats. Comparative linguists, descriptive/theoretical/general linguists, sociolinguists, applied linguists, dialectologists, translato-logists, lexicographers, language planners, language teachers, sociologists, psychologists, pedolinguists (or child language specialists), language speakers, curriculum designers, and allied professionals are all relevant to the envisaged revitalized linguistic engineering.

It is not feasible to focus on all Nigerian languages at the same time, level and scope. The cost of pursuing the

promotion and development of all the languages simultaneously would be prohibitive. There has to be some criteria for selecting the languages. There are the official major languages (Hausa, Igbo, and Yoruba) each of which is spoken by at least 20 million people either as a First or Second language. There are also those which are spoken by millions of people but which do not have wide spreads as the major languages mentioned above. These include Fulfulde, Kanuri, Ibibio, Ijo, Tiv, Nupe, Edo, Urhobo, Igala, Idoma, Igbirra/Ebira, Gwari/Gbagyi, Kana, Egun, and so on. While the three major languages and a few of the second group languages can be handled at both the National/Federal and State levels, the other languages are better handled at State and Local Government levels (see also Adeniran 1990:33ff; and Emenanjo 1990:88ff).

Perhaps a major step towards delineation and delimitation of scope is to conduct a proper census of these languages. Exactly how many languages are in Nigeria today? What is the population of the speakers of each language? And how widespread are they? These are relevant questions to be answered in order to plan properly. It is misleading to continue to make reference to the language map, and census figures of three decades ago. Unfortunately, these relevant questions generated some acrimony during the recent (2006) enumeration/counting exercise. If we can downplay chauvinism and sentiments, concrete information about indigenous languages should facilitate better planning. Undergraduates of Nigerian universities in the Faculties of Arts, Education, Social Sciences, and so on, can be mobilized

to join hands with graduates on the National Youth Service Corps, university lecturers, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations for these rewarding exercise. The task can be accomplished in a matter of months, or within a period of three long-vacations. The results/gains of the exercise, if properly conducted, will more than compensate for the cost (i.e. money, time and other resources invested in the project).

The Nigerian peoples, especially the elite must change their attitudes toward indigenous languages. Nigerian languages are not inferior to any European language. These languages if consistently promoted over a period of time can grow and gain utility value as much as English of today. Some centuries back, English was a minor language where Greek, Latin and French existed. But the dynamics of existence has tilted the balance in favour of English today. The same can happen to our indigenous languages if we consciously/deliberately design our plans and meticulously implement them. It is our responsibility as the owners of the language (native speakers) to rehabilitate and elevate these languages through constant use.

Some Nigerian languages are in vantage positions in that, apart from millions of Nigerians who speak them either as First or Second languages, they are also spoken by millions of people outside the Nigerian borders. Capo (1990:2) states that "Nigeria shares 8 languages with Benin Republic, 16 with Cameroon, 3 with Chad, and 5 with Niger" (see also Capo 1982:130). In addition, a few of them are used for mass communication by some popular international electronic

media. For instance, Hausa is spoken by scores of millions of Nigerians, just as it is spoken by millions of others in the West African sub-region (e.g. Benin, and Niger Republics, both of which are Franco-phone countries). News broadcasts are in Hausa on the British Broadcasting Corporation, Voice of America, as well as Radio Stations in China, Germany, and so on. Yoruba which is spoken by scores of millions of Nigerians is also spoken in Benin Republic, Brazil, and so on. Similarly, Fulfulde is spoken by millions of people within Nigeria, and in sub-Saharan Africa such as Benin, and Niger Republics. By implication, each of these languages has the potential of becoming a sub-regional lingua-franca, as well as an Official or National Language. They are more or less in the same category as Swahili in East Africa, as highlighted in the next section.

Nigeria is the most populous, heterogeneous, and linguistically diverse country in Africa with about 140 million people (official figure as at 2006), over 400 languages, and about 250 ethnic groups. One out of every four black African is a Nigerian. The diversities of language, ethnicity, religion, and so on can be exploited to the advantage of a country that has been described as the GIANT OF AFRICA. With a carefully designed and implemented language policy, therefore, it is possible for one of the major languages to emerge, not only as the Official or National Language, but possibly also as a sub-regional language. It is only a matter of time, with all things being equal. It is also an advantage that "... more than 90% of Nigeria's population speak, and can be reached through not more than 12 of Nigeria's 400 languages"

(Oyelaran 1990:30; see also Emenanjo 1990:89 & Agheyisi 1986). This would facilitate the selection of those languages that can be promoted for use as Official or National Language as well as sub-regional or global language.

Another laudable aspect of linguistic engineering in Nigeria is that Nigerian school children are encouraged to learn one of the major languages (i.e. Hausa, Igbo, or Yoruba) in addition to their Mother Tongues (*National Policy on Education* 1998:4). The objective is to promote national unity which is necessary for meaningful development. This policy statement was formulated over two decades ago (*NPE* 1977) but the various impediments to its effective implementation should be tackled in order to realize the desired objectives. More trained teachers should be produced and motivated, more teaching/learning aids and textual materials should be provided. It is also very important to promote/encourage the teaching/study of Linguistics as well as Nigerian languages in more Nigerian institutions (see also Olaofe 1990). Already many institutions in Europe and America run programmes in some Nigerian languages. There is no reason, therefore, why Nigerian institutions cannot promote the study of indigenous languages alongside Linguistics.

It is pertinent, at this juncture, to mention one way by which language policies must not be pursued. 'Legislation by fiat' without consultation, often devoid of informed or professional opinion should be avoided. An instance is what happened in the late 1990s under a military regime. For purely political reasons, without scientific basis, French was (to be) introduced as Nigeria's **second official language**. This is

contained in the *National Policy on Education* (1998:4) where it is stated that: *"For smooth interaction with our neighbours, it is desirable for every Nigerian to speak French .Accordingly, French shall be the second official language in Nigeria, and it shall be compulsory in school"*. This kind of uninformed political decision is not only bizarre but also dangerous for the well-being of the nation. A compulsory second official (foreign) language is actually not desirable in view of the prevailing circumstances which require the promotion of indigenous languages. It would have made every Nigerian child a quadrilingual, with the attendant psychological, cognitive implications. Adults would even have more problems than children in coping with another foreign official language. The policy would be too expensive. The cost of implementing this policy is better diverted to the proposed revitalized linguistic engineering. It is good that the clause has been allowed to remain on paper.

The translation industry has a great role to play in the proposed revitalized linguistic engineering because it serves as a bridge between diverse linguistic, ethnic and social groups. The President or Minister who gives his policy address to the nation in English requires some form of translation or interpretation into different indigenous languages for the vast majority of Nigerians to be reached (vertical communication). A material written in one language needs to be rendered in some other languages to widen its readership (horizontal communication). Information coded in a foreign language also needs to be translated into Nigerian languages, and vice versa (cyclical communication). In this

way, translation can be used to democratize knowledge, for enlightenment, and to promote mutual understanding (Surakat 1988). In essence, there is a need to develop translation studies as an academic discipline, and as a professional course or programme. Translation studies should not be limited to the Indo-European languages.

Nigerian government should commit resources to the development and promotion of Nigerian languages to the status of official, national languages through an explicit language policy (Bamgbose 1982; Olofe 1990). The government should be committed to using Nigerian languages for administration, legislation, mass mobilization, journalism, and as mediums of instruction both in the formal and informal school systems. Similarly, academics and teachers should promote the study and use of indigenous languages at all levels of schooling. What has been lacking in successive governments is the POLITICAL WILL to squarely address the linguistic and other socio-economic problems. Lip service and half-hearted measures must give way to concerted and re-invigorated policy measures and actions. As the saying goes, if there is the WILL, there is always a WAY. With proper planning and implementation – CETERIS PARIBUS – Nigeria should be able to evolve a National Language or National Languages over a period time.

When Nigerian languages are developed, studied, researched and promoted to the status of official language(s), and when eventually a National Language or National Languages emerge/s, it would not be difficult to use them in the context of modern Information and Communication

Technology. Computer keyboards, Internet services, On-line dictionaries, Electronic grammar and so on are sure ways of making Nigerian languages ICT-compliant. At that point, we would have arrived as active participants in the global village, using our own voice to express our inner feelings and views. And if we decide to speak any other language directly, or through translation/ interpretation, it would have been a matter of choice rather than compulsion or desperation. In order words, the only reasonable thing to do is to intensify and vigorously pursue a result-oriented linguistic engineering programme.

Swahili for East Africa

In East Africa, there is a great potential which has not been fully exploited. It has to do with the promotion of Swahili as a sub-regional language, for socio-economic integration, and as a symbol of unity. Just as West Africa has Anglo-phone and Franco-phone countries, there are diverse official languages in Eastern Africa. However, West Africa (in spite of the spread of Hausa across national boundaries) cannot boast of a language which has a unifying potential that Swahili enjoys in the Great Lakes region.

In Tanzania and Kenya, Swahili is very popular either as a first or second language. This trend can be promoted in other countries such as Uganda, Rwanda, and so on. Indeed Uganda is resolved to embrace Swahili for the purposes of regional integration and East African Economic Community. If and when Swahili is embraced by all or most of Eastern Africa, certain barriers to sub-regional integration are bound

to disappear, and the region has a lot to gain from that.

In order to facilitate the use of Swahili as a Lingua Franca or sub-regional language in Eastern Africa, most of the measures highlighted in the Nigeria case –study also need to be adopted. The proposed Eastern regional government would benefit tremendously from the promotion and development of Swahili.

3. Conclusion

In the tradition of critical linguistic discourse, this paper has attempted to discuss development-oriented linguistic engineering for Black Africa. The core objective is to highlight practical measures for developing and promoting African languages for relevance, especially within the context of globalisation. Reference has been made to the Nigerian (West African) example of language planning as well as the potentials of Swahili as a sub-regional language in East Africa. It is hoped that in the course of time, a well designed and implemented linguistic engineering can produce African languages which can compete with English (or French, etc) for the purposes of national and international communication.

Every nation, culture, continent has a voice which deserves to be heard in an ideal global village. It is normal for China to use Chinese and Germany to use German within the global context. And if each of these countries desire to use English or French in addition to her own language, it is a matter of choice. But there is some abnormality associated with an African using the medium of French or English to express his inner cultural feelings. Certainly, some things

would be lacking; subtle as well as serious ones. Two famous writers, Achebe (from Nigeria, West Africa) and Ngugi (Kenya, East Africa) were originally comfortable using English as the medium for their artistic, literary expressions, ostensibly to reach a wider audience. Today, they seem to have realized that indigenous languages would serve them better to reach their African folks, most of whom were marginalized by the English medium.

For African countries to express the feeling and 'Voice of Africa', efforts must be made to promote and develop African languages which apparently have no inherent genetic inhibitions. Linguistic engineering is the only answer, and the time is now so as to save African cultures and languages from total extinction, with all its attendant consequences. It is highly recommended that African leaders and peoples should learn to address local, national and sub-regional problems alongside global issues. If we fail to solve local problems and plunge into global affairs as mere on-lookers or passive participants, the consequence is perpetual under-development. The growth and development of Africa within the context of globalisation can only be promoted and safeguarded by African governments and peoples. It is a great challenge which must be tackled with all seriousness. The language issue is no exception. Those who fail to plan, are, of course, planning to fail.

Note

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9. Globalisation & the Preservation of Nigerian Languages

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This paper sets out to

- present a structure for providing and updating information on the languages of Nigeria with a view to contributing new parameters for the classification of Nigerian languages, along geopolitical lines in order to set the stage for large scale description and documentation.
- provide a multi-linguistic approach as an alternative to a unitary linguistic system in the description, documentation and preservation of Nigerian Languages.
- explore ways of empowering them in order to enable Nigeria participate effectively as a member of the global community, without endangering the uniqueness and beauty of her linguistic diversity.
- review some attempts at ICT and documentation projects, and recommend ways we can tap on them maximally.

1. Introduction

There is a current technological revolution going on in the information technology. The challenges that globalisation pose for Nigeria cut across all areas of her national life. The most difficult aspects of these challenges are cultural, particularly with regard to how Nigeria can become a full and

participating member of the new global village. This aspiration is even more daunting, especially as she operates within the limitations of a developing nation. We can only participate in globalisation if urgent and far-reaching actions are taken in such areas as languages, group consciousness, identity, etc.

Nigeria's cultural heritage must be preserved, shared and passed on. Our cultural heritage has both the tangible part, like dressing, paintings, carving, etc., and the intangible parts, like the oral traditions, songs, etc. Language is a crucial medium and transmitter of the intangible Nigerian cultural heritage. This intangible part of our heritage is threatened by the revolution that globalisation presents.

Nigerian languages have to be part of this revolution. A major challenge therefore is to empower Nigerian languages and position them to partake in the information revolution.

We need a database and structures for capacity building in different areas of our civilization. The linguistic picture of Nigeria is still very hazy, as there are still many unexplored languages. We cannot say for sure that the 515 languages recorded for Nigeria in Grimes (2000), and other linguistic references on Nigerian languages is accurate, as the data used in the classification of these languages are in some cases obsolete.

The globalisation trend towards mutual understanding and international cooperation implies a unitary linguistic system. This is obvious in the fact that the soft wares for internet access are designed for a few languages with English as the most popular. If globalisation implies to a large extent a common language, then what is the plight of Nigerian

indigenous languages? What are the implications of globalisation for the preservation of these languages in the light of the current international fights against language death? How can Nigerian languages participate effectively in globalisation and yet preserve her unique but divert languages?

These are very disturbing questions. In the rest of the paper, as we explore ways of addressing these questions, our argument is presented in five sections. In section 2, we attempt a definition of globalisation. Section 3 presents some fundamental issues to address in order to effectively globalise Nigerian languages. In section 4, we present some attempts at documentation and ICT projects. Section 5 actually makes a case for globalisation and its use to preserve Nigerian languages and we conclude in section 6.

2. Globalisation as Colonization or Sharing

Globalisation has been used to describe many things from different perspectives, ranging from a process, a condition, a system, a force and an age. It is a 'set of processes that manifests in cultural, economic, political, technological, ecological and many other dimensions' (Adegbola 2004). But basically, it involves some kind of interaction. Steger (2003), cited in Adegbola (2004) presents four features of globalisation:

- a. Creation and multiplication of social networks activities that go beyond the traditional political, economic, cultural and geographical boundaries
- b. Reflection in the expansion and stretching of social

relations, activities and interdependencies

- c. Intensification and acceleration of social activities and exchanges
- d. Involvement of the subjective plane of human consciousness.

Since globalisation involves basically some interaction, it follows therefore that the interaction can be monopolized by some groups involved in the interaction, thus colonizing the activities. However on the other hand, the different activities can be shared by the participating members. An implication of such sharing is the empowerment and acquisition of the correct tools of participation. In other words, we have two options: being colonized or sharing. A crucial question to ask at this stage is which of these two options do we want?

We have a rich cultural heritage, much of which is in intangible form. Language is a crucial medium of both storage and transmission of this aspect of our cultural heritage, a heritage that is as diverse as our languages. The uniqueness of these languages need to be preserved even in the kind of sharing that globalisation involves. These languages need to be empowered through a conscious effort of development, so that they can be properly positioned to take part in the current globalisation revolution. If Nigerian languages are left out of this revolution, then the other languages that are currently being empowered will end up colonizing those of our languages that are not being attended to now.

Is the large number of languages in Nigeria an excuse for not attending to them and developing them? Is it fair that a few languages attract so much attention, while some others

are dying out of neglect and lack of use? Does the choice of three languages foster any national feelings at all?

3. Fundamentals for Globalisation & Preservation of Nigerian Languages

The linguistic picture of Nigeria is rather complicated. Several figures have been cited, one of which is Grime's (2000) 515 languages. It has been argued that this figure is not a fair assessment of the languages spoken in Nigeria.

In addition to the problem of the number of languages spoken in the country, its language policy recognizes only three 'major' languages, Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo, which have enjoyed a lot of government patronage to the detriment of other minority languages. The terms 'majority' and 'minority' are official labels used to describe Nigerian languages. This kind of dichotomy in classification is not very healthy. Every language has a right to be developed, no matter the number of its speakers. In order to address this imbalance, we recommend a reclassification of Nigerian languages, along geopolitical lines.

a. A Reclassification of Nigerian Languages

Nigeria has a geopolitical structure, which seems to be working in terms of development in other areas. It has a three-tier structure i.e. national, state and local government levels. The country is therefore divided into thirty six states, and a Federal Capital Territory. Each state is further divided into Local Government Areas (LGAs), with a total of seven hundred and seventy four (774) LGAs. The whole country is further divided, for ease of management, into six geopolitical

zones - South-South, South-East, South-West, North-East, North-Central and North-West Zones (see table 1).

The languages spoken in Nigeria are spoken at different levels, and they can therefore perform different functions. The languages spoken at the level of the grassroots cannot be useful at the state or national levels. Since they are useful to the speakers at that level, they should properly addressed and at that level too.

Each LGA should have an LGA language to be chosen at that level, preferably the language spoken in the LGA headquarters. The LGA, which is the level of the grassroots, should play as active a role as the state and federal levels in the development and choice of an LGA language. Each Local Government Area should have a language committee to look at language matters. Such a committee should be made up of members of the LGA who may not be linguists. Linguistic specialists can be invited to provide the technical know-how, especially with regard to the corpus planning.

Each state should have a state language, preferably the language spoken in the state capital. There should be a state language committee to address linguistic issues.

The English language which is currently serving as the national and international language, can continue to function as such. If the focus shifts from it to the indigenous languages at the different levels of administration, and there are visible efforts to develop and use these languages, the misgivings about the use of another language will be accepted.

The Federal Government should provide clear guidelines and supervise the states and LGAs on the choice and development of these languages.

However, to be able to do this, we need to first of all have a clearer picture of the linguistic situation in the country. This aspect of research requires a lot of collaboration, coordination and funding.

b. The Nigerian Geopolitical Language Survey (NGLS)

With a geopolitical classification of Nigerian languages, it will be easier to have some kind of census of these languages. The linguistic overview of the six zones in Nigeria are presented in table 1. This is from a current geopolitical survey of these zones, the Nigerian Geopolitical Language Survey (NGLS). There should really be a proper database for all the languages and varieties spoken in the country. Such a database should make provision for storage, retrieval and updates. A proper language census should feed such a database, and it should be posted on the web, as well, where anyone can access.

The NGLS project is being undertaken by the Department of Linguistics and Nigerian Languages, University of Uyo. This is a step in the right direction. A collaboration on this with other universities in Nigerian will help build an authentic database on the languages of Nigeria.

Although the survey has not been concluded, indications have emerged as shown in table 1. Out of the six zones, the South-West, South-East and North-West appear to be fairly homogenous. Note that only the dominant languages are indicated here.¹ Therefore, even where one language is recorded for the state, there may be other 'minor' languages spoken within the State.

Nigerian languages should be addressed at the different political and administrative levels, beginning with the grass

root level, the LGA. If this is done, then every language will be touched because every language is spoken at this level. Even the endangered and extinct ones are located somewhere. Even though there are 774 LGAs, some languages cut across several LGAs and states. Such languages like Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo are fairly described and documented.. The problem really lies with the others. Each LGA should be allowed to choose the language(s) it wishes to describe and document within a ranking of importance, using agreed criteria like population, the peoples' wish, etc. If the initial description involves the speakers of the language(s), it will be more acceptable and effective. With the choice at the grass root level, the state can then in addition to the state language help in the documentation. Almost every state in Nigeria has a university, and some even have more than one. The departments of Linguistics are often one of the first departments to be established in the Humanities. Linguistic departments in collaboration with the National Institute of Nigerian Languages (NINLAN), should draw up a program for the description and documentation of the languages in each state. This way, heterogeneous states will touch many languages with time. This kind of multilingual approach to the development of the languages of Nigeria will help in both their description and documentation.

Table 1 – A Geopolitical Profile of the Languages of Nigeria

<i>Zone</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Capital</i>	<i>Number of LGAs</i>	<i>Number of languages²</i>	<i>Dominant language(s)</i>
One	South-South				
1	Akwa Ibom	Uyo	31	10	Ibibio Anaang Oro
2	Bayelsa	Yenogoa	08	06	Izon
3	Delta	Asaba	25	05	Urhobo Itsekiri Igbo
4	Edo	Benin	18	10	Edo
5	Cross River	Calabar	18	37	Efik Ejagham Bekwarra
6	Rivers	Port Harcourt	23	35	Ikwere Kana (Khana) Kalabari
Two	South-East				
7	Ebonyi	Abakaliki	13	03	Igbo
8	Anambra	Awka	21	01	Igbo
9	Enugu	Enugu	17	01	Igbo
10	Imo	Owerri	27	01	Igbo
11	Abia	Umuahia	17	01	Igbo
Three	South-West				
12	Oyo	Ibadan	33	01	Yoruba
13	Lagos	Ikeja	20	01	Yoruba
14	Ogun	Abeokuta	20	01	Yoruba
15	Ekiti	Ado-Ekiti	16	01	Yoruba
16	Ondo	Akure	18	07	Yoruba

17	Osun	Osogbo	30	01	Yoruba
Four	North-East				
18	Adamawa	Yola	21	55	Fulfulde Hausa
19	Bornu	Maiduguri	27	30	Kanuri
20	Yobe	Damaturu	17	13	Kanuri Fulfulde Hausa
21	Gombe	Gombe	11	03	Hausa Fulfulde
22	Bauchi	Bauchi	20	12	Hausa Fulfulde
23	Taraba	Jalingo	16	80	Fulfulde Hausa
Five	North-Central				
24	Niger	Minna	24	15	Nupe Gwari Hausa
25	Plateau	Jos	17	40	?Birom ?Angas ?Tiv
26	Nassara wa	Lafia	13	20	Eggon Hausa Tiv
27	Kogi	Lokoja	21	06	Igala Ebira
28	Benue	Makurdi	23	09	Tiv Igala
29	Kwara	Ilorin	16	06	Yoruba Nupe Baruba
30	F.C.T	Abuja	06		?Hausa

Six	North-West				
31	Sokoto	Sokoto	23	03	Hausa Fulfulde
32	Zamfara	Gusau	15	11	Hausa Fulfulde
33	Katsina	Katsina	34	04	Hausa Fulfulde
34	Kano	Kano	44	06	Hausa Fulfulde
35	Kaduna	Kaduna	23	30	Hausa Fulfulde
36	Kebbi	Birnin Kebbi	22	10	Hausa Fulfulde
37	Jigawa	Dutse	27	05	Hausa Fulfulde

c. Databases and Archiving of Nigerian Languages

Nigerian languages need to be described and documented in a systematic way. We need databases of wordlists, lexicons, annotated signals, linguistic descriptions, dictionaries, etc. We can begin with the traditional paper databases of wordlists, text corpus, dictionaries, etc., but we need to go a step further to convert these to digital forms so that they can be stored in the electronic archives.

Some Nigerian languages have these, but the point is that the documentation and description is haphazard. We need a more systematic plan. The Open Language Archive Community (OLAC) has several archives of languages of the world. How many of the Nigerian languages that we have been working on have been empowered enough to be shared with the OLAC community?

4. Some Documentation and ICT Projects

Nigerian languages need to be documented, in conformity with Global Information Infrastructure (GII). Nigerian languages can be made relevant to information technology, and a number of initiatives are trying to do this. There are several language archives which house documentation and description of human languages, most of them 'minority' and endangered languages of the world. Nigerian languages can also be documented and archived. Although not much has been done in this area, two initiatives are worthy of mention here.

a. WALA - West African Language Archives

The West African Language Archives (WALA) provides an opportunity for documented languages to be stored in archives that can be accessed by everyone with the know-how.

The West African Language Archive is a public electronic multilingual resource repository for West African Languages. It aims to among other things document and store these languages, in order to create an empirical basis for corpus driven linguistic research and teaching in local universities. Aspects of these languages that are covered include: digital audio recordings, multimodal (audio and video) recordings, multiplier annotations of recordings, sketch grammars, dictionaries (core and extensive dictionaries), biographies, metadata, catalogues, etc.

The motivation for its creation according to Gibbon et al. (2004) fall into the following main categories, and each of them has yielded the following fruits:

1. Heritage documentation for an ethnic group and contribution to the group's own knowledge of its historical identity. This has produced a design of an encyclopedia of Ivory Coast languages.
2. Provision of language materials for applications in local education and ... information technologies such as speech synthesis based agricultural and health information systems for pre-literate rural communities. This has led to the creation of a speech synthesis for use in pre-literate Ibibio rural communities in Nigeria.
3. Creation of high quality empirical basis for corpus driven linguistic research and teaching in local universities. This has produced a documentation of an endangered language, Ega (Ivory coast)
4. Training of local specialists in language documentation with a multiplier effect on the development of the repository. This created a joint Nigeria-Ivorian-German multilingual curriculum development project in language documentation.

So far, a few languages are stored in this archive like Ibibio and Iko (Nigeria); Abbey, Anyi, Baule and Ega (Ivory Coast).

b. ALT-I - African Languages Technology Initiative

The African Languages Technology Initiative is a research and development agency. Its aims among others include to:

1. Raise awareness in modern ICTs relevant to African languages

2. Build human research and development in Human Language Technology (HTL) of African languages
3. Develop appropriate software and hardware components for African languages
4. Disseminate findings and best workable practices for African languages
5. Encourage and facilitate networking with others running such projects both in Africa and abroad

It has recorded many achievements since its inception in 2002, especially in the areas of corpus development, speech synthesis, advocacy, and the promotion of community radio broadcasting in minority languages. It is based in Ibadan, and it is run by a team of computer engineers, linguists, etc.

ALT-I is currently running a pilot study on Yoruba on which it has several projects in the following areas:

1. Corpus development and language modeling
2. Yoruba keyboard and word processor
3. Speech synthesis
4. Speech recognition
5. Advocacy seminars and workshops

ALT-I should go beyond Yoruba and help in empowering other languages. But it needs preliminary information and description and a collaboration of linguists working on other languages.

5. Globalisation & the Preservation of Nigerian Languages

Following our definition in section 2, globalisation basically involves some kind of interaction. This interaction operates

both in the space of place and the space of flows, and different processes like economic, linguistic, and several other processes are involved. To be a partaker in this process, special tools are needed.

Linguistic globalisation requires special tools to prepare the languages to operate in space. Languages need to be empowered to be shared. The preparation of these languages begins with the traditional language **description** which involves a record and analysis of the competence data of a language. However, it goes further to include **documentation** whose aim is basically the record of a comprehensive linguistic practices of a people (Himmelman 1998).

Documentation of both vibrant and endangered languages is gradually developing tools and evolving best practices for this new enterprise, and the documentation of the languages are stored in electronic archives. The Open Language Archives Community (OLAC) is open to all linguists who have documents to share. The Electronic Metastructure for Endangered Languages Data (E-MELD) has produced a new software tool for the development and sharing of lexical databases and digital archiving called the Field Input Environment for Linguistic Data (FIELD).

This kind of global sharing of linguistic data involves both the description, sharing and the preservation of the stored data. If the best practices are worked out such that data stored can be retrieved, then languages documented in these archives will be preserved.

The big question is: how many Nigerian languages are empowered enough to share in this wonderful global linguistic enterprise?

Conclusion

Globalisation should be more of sharing than colonizing. After the experience of sovereign colonization in the space of place, we need to put in all our efforts to resist a colonization of the space flows. In the words of Urua and Gibbon (2004), 'Products need to conform to standards that are globally defined for easy processing and uniform assessment and evaluation. This will ease storage, access and retrieval procedures'.

This is the best place to begin, if Nigerian languages can be empowered to partake in globalisation and the advantages that it presents. Such empowerment should begin with the documentation and description of these languages, which should be systematically done based on a database that is constantly updated. These can be stored in archives which can be accessed easily to ease comparative works and further development of these languages, in all areas, especially in conformity with Global Information Infrastructure. The OLAC community will benefit very much from such records of the diverse but unique languages of Nigeria, and the languages stored in the archives will be preserved until retrieved.

Notes

1. The details of the linguistic situation in the 774 LGAs of all six zones are currently being published in preliminary series. See Udoh (2003) for the first volume on the South-South Zone.
2. The number of languages given here are from a current study still in progress, which is to appear in *Languages of Nigeria: A Geopolitical Profile*. In addition to our current survey of Nigerian languages, we have drawn heavily from Crozier/Blench (1992) and Grimes (2000) and Mamman/Oyebanji/Peters (2000). We have however, avoided the controversy of the distinction between languages and dialects, but we are sensitive the wishes of the speakers of all these wonderful languages. The languages considered here are the indigenous languages.

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10. An Appraisal of the Impact of English on the Development of Nigerian Languages

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1. Introduction

Nigeria is essentially a multilingual nation, owing to numerous languages that exist in the country. There also exists some foreign languages like English, French, Arabic, Latin, and so on as a result of its exposure to British colonialism and civilization, Christian and Islamic evangelism and the obnoxious Trans-Atlantic slave trade.

In terms of the number of Nigerian languages (NLS), Elugbe (1997) citing Crozier and Blench (1992) which is a revision of Hansford et al. (1976), says there are some four hundred and thirty indigenous languages in Nigeria. As regards their level of development and use in the educational system, they are classified, according to Emenanjo (1993:3) and Aziza (1998:257), into 'developed'; 'developing'; and 'under developed'. The developed ones are said to be those with well-established orthographies, standard written varieties, long traditions of writing, large and varied corpora of written literature among other types of texts and sophisticated and dynamic metalanguage. Only the three major Nigerian languages, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba unambiguously belong to this group. The developing languages have only a recent history of writing while the undeveloped ones exist only in the spoken form, and the bulk of Nigerian languages belong to this group. However, despite these classifications which are contentious, the fact remains that no matter how developed our 'developed' languages are,

the average Nigerian feels that they can never compete with English or any other major European language.

In recent times, there has been a conscious effort to sensitize the populace on the importance of language and its relevance in social interaction, effective co-operation, cultural dissemination and of course national development. It is consequent upon this that the Federal Government of Nigeria through the National Policy on Education (NPE) section 1, paragraph 10 states thus:

Government appreciates the importance of language as a means of promoting social interaction and national cohesion; and preserving culture. Thus, every child shall learn the language of the immediate environment. Furthermore, in the interest of national unity, it is expedient that every child shall be required to learn one of the three Nigerian languages: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba (1998:9).

Although the above stipulation seems not to be fully implemented, it has however, stimulated interest and created some awareness on issues regarding the learning, teaching and acquisition of the mother tongues (MTS) and the major Nigerian languages (MNLS). The pertinent questions to ask at this juncture are: have the above government's efforts and related efforts with regard to the development of indigenous languages yielded the desired result? How sincere or serious is the Federal Government of Nigeria in implementing the language provision of the National Policy on Education and the constitutional provision on language use? Furthermore, are there certain factors militating against the development of Nigerian Languages? Why do majority of Nigerians attach more importance on the use of English and its pidgin varieties than on any of the Nigerian languages? Has the presence and

use of The English language impacted positively or negatively on the development of Nigerian languages?

There is no doubt that several linguistic scholars have written or commented extensively on major issues relating to language development in Nigeria or the factors militating against it all of which sheds directly or indirectly on the possible answers to the above questions (Bamgbose, 1971; Elugbe, 1997; Emenanjo, 1990; Essien, O.E., 1993; Aziza, 1998; Igboanusi, 2002; Oyetade, 2001).

In what follows, we shall critically examine one of the potential factors militating against the development of Nigerian languages. In essence, we shall be focusing on the impacts of The English language on the development of Nigerian languages. This is more so as recent studies on language attitude indicate that majority of Nigerians have strong positive attitude towards English while their attitudes towards Nigerian languages is rather negative (Babajide, 2001' Oyetade, 2001; Elugbe, 1997). This is in spite of all the spirited efforts to change the trend, for instance, the language provision of NPE and its implementation to some extent and the establishment of National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN) in Aba, Abia State.

1.1 The Use of English in Nigeria & Nigerian's Attitude towards it

Although the exact time the English language was introduced in Nigeria is not well known, the language has been in the country for several centuries. In fact what really aided the implantation of the language in Nigeria which was already heavily endowed with so many languages include the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, British Colonialism and Western civilisation, missionary activities and importantly Western education. According to Babajide (2001:3) it is however certain that as early as 1472, Nigeria was already in contact with

Europe. In buttressing his view, he cites Ajayi (1965) who reports that Hope Waddel found very intelligent journals of the affairs of this country kept by its rulers, written in English, of so old a date as 1767. Thus, there is no gainsaying that the language has sojourned in the country for a very long time and it has grown to become the most popular language in the land. In the words of Akindede and Adegbite (2000:46) in Babajide (2001:3),

There is no gainsaying the fact that English has become a Nigerian language. The language has become an invaluable legacy of the British which has provided Nigerians with yet another means of expressing their culture.

This shows the extent to which the language has become prominent in the Nigerian socio-linguistic context. In Nigeria today, The English language has become so popular and almost indispensable as a result of its numerous functional roles. For instance, in addition to this all laws, bye-laws, decrees and edicts are made and interpreted in The English language. On the place of the language in the country, Bamgbose (1971:35) remarks that "it could, perhaps be regarded as the most important heritage left behind in Nigeria by the British at the end of colonial administration." Moreover, in the field of academics, before anybody can have the opportunity to do any course in the university, polytechnic, college of education and even school of nursing and midwifery, such a candidate must have obtained at least a pass or credit in English language in the examination set by a recognized examining body like West African Examination Council (WAEC), General Certificate on Education (G.C.E.).

Again, if one examines the current school set-up in Nigeria, one will see that English has been given more

attention both in curriculum planning, scheduling and pedagogical approaches.

As Ogunyeni (2000:284) rightly observes the major roles which could have hastened the developmental process of the indigenous languages have been assigned to the English language.

Consequent upon the place of English and its numerous functional roles in the nation's socio-linguistic context, it therefore becomes expedient for any Nigerian that wants to be relevant to his social, economic and political environment to learn and acquire some appreciable knowledge of English. According to Babajide (2001:4). This explains why both the literate and non-literate have great respect for anyone who has an admirable proficiency in English. This seems to be in consonance with his earlier observation that in a society with a pronounced linguistic multiplicity, people tend to be more favourable and positively disposed to using and tolerating a language that has such attributes as:

- (a) a considerable national and international coverage of users;
- (b) a metropolitan or cosmopolitan status;
- (c) a considerable numerical strength and some measure of economic and political power; and
- (d) a sufficiently reliable codified form.

There is no doubt that English unlike most languages in Nigeria and beyond meets all the above criteria, hence it is often regarded as a language of: high status, prestige, education and power. This is also largely responsible for the great importance being attached to its use; teaching and learning.

In the opinion of Igboanusi (2002:104), with the ever-increasing influence of America in politics, economy and

culture of the world, it is expected that the language will continue to grow in number of speakers and in geographical spread.

Recent investigations show that in the multilingual Nigerian society where English with its Pidgin varieties acts as the unifying tongue, the attitude of Nigeria to the English language is strongly positive (Tengan, 1994; Babajide, 2001; Oyetade, 2001).

1.2 The Impacts of English on the Development of Nigerian Languages

Having considered the linguistic situation in Nigeria and the roles of the English language as well as the people's attitude towards it, it is sufficient to examine at this juncture the impacts of English in the development of our indigenous languages. To this regard, we shall be focusing on both the positive and negative impacts so as to ensure a balanced assessment.

Positive Impacts

Languages generally are the most effective means of human's communication, interaction, co-operation and development. They are not only aspects of culture but vital means of expressing the people's culture and values. Consequently, the advent of The English language into the country and its wide acceptance brought with it several concepts, words, terms or expressions associated with the English culture, tradition, institution and philosophy. All these have gone a long way in widening and expanding the vocabularies of the local languages. However, for the fact that they were not originally in the Nigerian culture and environment, they are usually given a descriptive name as in school, church, hospital, university, ship, vehicle and train. Some items that are not easily translatable into the local languages like bread,

window, tea, television, radio, sugar, days of the week and so on are left with their English names but are spelt based on the spelling rules of the language of the immediate environment (LIE).

Many Nigerians, especially those who are Christians now answer English or Christian names which more or less reflects their believe and faith in their Western religion and as these names are being expressed and domesticated in the LIE, the vocabularies of the affected languages will be greatly enriched. This situation augurs well for the rapid language development.

Again, the adoption of English as the official language which also acts as a unifying tongue in the nation's multilingual society has seemingly reduced tension and conflict that could have arisen over which of the nation's numerous languages is to be adopted as the official language or lingua franca. Such tension or conflict could have adverse effect in the development of our indigenous languages.

Importantly, the introduction of The English language and eventually the western education facilitated the development of orthographies of most of the local languages which hitherto were only in oral form due to lack of orthographies for their writing. In fact, the earliest studies in African languages and culture which initially took the form of wordlist collection and the identification for the alphabets of the affected languages was carried out by the foreign missionaries and those under the auspices of International Institute for Africa Languages and Cultures (IILAC). In these activities, The English language played a prominent role in addition, its orthography served as the springboard or model of that of the local languages.

Furthermore, it is sufficient to maintain that the use of The English language plays a crucial role in the teaching and learning of the major Nigerian languages as second languages, which is a Federal Government's initiative aimed at

developing and popularising the three adopted national languages (Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba) for the purposes of enhancing social interaction, preservation of culture and natural endowment, promotion of peace and unity as well as for national development. This is in line with the language provision of National Policy on Education (NPE). All these go a long way to show that languages like human beings need each other for survival and none can effectively develop in isolation.

Moreover, certain English literary materials such as novels, poetry, drama, music, articles and essays are being translated into local languages. For instance, the Holy Bible has been translated into almost all Nigerian languages. These challenging literary activities have no doubt impacted positively on the development of our indigenous languages and have perhaps saved some of them from extinction.

Negative Impacts

Although in Nigeria, a population of not more than 20 percent speaks English, the linguistic situation in Nigeria reveals the dominance of English in terms of spread, acceptance and its official role (Igboanusi, 1977:23).

The implication is that the language of the rest of the 80% of the population which are largely the Nigerian languages are the dominated ones. In essence, more importance is being attached to the use of The English language than the indigenous ones and this has resulted in people developing strong positive attitude towards English and negative attitudes towards the language in Nigeria. As Ogunyemi, (2000:284) observes, English language is being accorded more attention both in the curriculum planning, scheduling and pedagogical approaches.

Consequently, the major roles which could have hastened the developmental process of the indigenous languages are

being assigned to the English language. For instance, much of the written communication like literature, letter writing, minutes of meeting, invitation cards, journalism and text messages is done in English.

Inclusively, English serves as the language of education and of administration at different levels. It also serves as a means of communication between individuals from different ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. All these essential roles promote language development. Regrettably in Nigeria: the use of English has hindered our own language from performing these roles thus stunting their growth and development.

Another area or aspect where the use of English has adversely impacted on the Nigerian languages is in the area of displacement. This is also referred to as language imperialism by socio-linguistic scholars. There is no gainsaying that in Nigeria and some other African countries, the introduction and wide acceptance of The English language has diminished the roles and activities of the indigenous ones. They are being compelled to play a second fiddle even in their legitimate environment. This ugly situation has led to the displacement and extinction of some Nigerian languages. For instance, Yankam is now a dead Nigerian language.

Perhaps, this ugly trend jolted the Federal Government of Nigeria and made her to come up with the language provision in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 1981, 1998). This provision now makes it expedient for every Nigerian child to learn one of the Nigerian languages – Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba as well as his mother tongue or language of his immediate environment (LIE).

Furthermore, the introduction and use of English in our multi-ethnic and multilingual society has grossly heightened the language conflict and language attitudinal problem in Nigeria. These two twin problem are like cankerworms which

have eaten deep into the fabrics of language development in Nigeria. Although, English is said to function as a unifying tongue in our nation where “tribes and tongues” differ, it also constitute a source of conflict in our homes, schools, offices, churches and other institutions where the foreign and the indigenous languages compete for attention. In fact, some people particularly the elites have become so contemptuous of their mother tongue that they neither speak them nor have respect for those who use them. This same situation, reported Oyetade (2001:21) has made parents to go to the extent of banning their children from using their mother tongue at home even though both parents speak the same language. However, this development is not unconnected with the great importance attached to English which is also regarded as a language of high status, prestige, commerce, administration, education and government.

It is sufficient to note that the continued use of English as a medium of instruction in Nigerian schools, as well as in seminars, workshops and symposia will discourage the development of Nigerian languages and cultures. The consequences of this are more devastating than the government and educators may realise.

It is no more surprising that some people particularly the elites look upon their languages with disdain and regard them not worthy of their children to learn. This is quite unfortunate because language is not only an integral part of the people’s culture but also a means of expressing the culture. Thus, denying one the opportunity of knowing or acquiring his indigenous language is an indirect way of making him to be culturally alienated.

Moreover, the students’ inability to master the language of instruction (English) may negatively affect their ability to understand many academic concepts. This cannot be said when their mother tongue are applied for the same purpose.

In fact, the continued emphasis on the use of English in almost all important roles a language can play in a society in spite of numerous indigenous languages that exist will not only retard the growth and development of these languages but will also force some of them out of existence.

Nonetheless, the great importance being attached to the use of The English language has led to poor attitude towards writing and producing reading materials in the local languages. In addition, this situation seems to be compounded by lack of interest by so many Nigerians to read works or materials written in indigenous languages. For instance, some of the Nigerian popular authors like Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Femi Osofisan, Zulu Sofola and even Nnamdi Azikwe and Obafemi Awolowo hardly write in Nigerian languages. Again, even the publishing companies don't seem to help matters as most of them usually prefer materials written in English to those written in indigenous languages.

Closely related to this is the poor attitude of many Nigerians towards reading books or journals written in indigenous language and even listening to radio and television programmes in these languages. The devastating effects this rather unpatriotic attitude has on the growth and development of our endowed languages can hardly be overstressed. There is no denying the fact that the dominant nature of English is largely responsible for Nigerian poor attitude to their language.

1.3 The Deduction

Consequent upon our discussion so far which has been on the review of the impacts of the English language on the development of our indigenous languages, the following deductions are relevant.

Nigeria is a great nation that is richly blessed with numerous languages among which are Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba,

Edo, Ibibio, Ekoi, Gwari, Idoma, Igala, Ebira, Ijaw, Emai, Itsekiri, Jukun, Nupe, Tiv, Urhobo, Fulani, Kanuri, Efik Ekpeye, Ayegbe and Gade. However, the actual number of Nigerian languages is not yet known.

The English language introduced in Nigeria by the colonial masters and European missionaries several centuries ago plays a very crucial and dominant role in the Nigerian government, media, commerce and education. Consequently, more importance is being attached to it than any of the indigenous languages.

Many Nigerians, especially the elites have developed strong positive attitudes towards the English language, on the other hand, their attitude towards Nigerian languages is rather negative. In our country which is both ethnic and multilingual, the English language essentially acts as a unifying tongue. This has facilitated social interaction and mutual understanding and cordial relationship. English is mainly the language of instruction in the teaching and learning of the major Nigerians languages as L₂.

The vocabularies of the indigenous languages have been tremendously increased or expanded due to borrowing, twisting or coinages from their English counterpart. This is not unusual in the process of language development or in a language contact situation.

In Nigeria's educational sector, research findings indicate that much time is allotted to the teaching of English language while little time is allotted to the teaching of indigenous languages (Ogunyemi, 2000:284). Relatively, English language is being accorded more attention in curriculum planning and Pedagogical scheduling. All these hamper the development of our indigenous languages and negatively affect the attitude of the people towards them.

The various governments' efforts aimed at developing the indigenous languages, especially the major ones are being

hampered by lack of proper implementation. The language provision of the National Policy on Education (NPE) is a good example.

Furthermore, the inability of many renowned Nigerian authors to write in local languages and the Publishers' lack of interest in accepting and publishing materials written in such languages is quite detrimental to the development of our indigenous languages.

For Nigeria to be truly regarded as an independent and sovereign nation, our indigenous languages have to be properly developed and even used in official capacity. This is more so as language is very vital in expressing the culture, tradition, values, mores and aspirations of the people and it plays a very crucial role in the social, economic, political, religious and cultural lives of the people. In fact, it is a mark of national identity and as such must be preserved.

1.4 Recommendations

Consequent upon our discussions and observations, it is pertinent to proffer the following recommendations.

Language be it indigenous or foreign is a vital means of communication and interaction in any given society. Thus, there should be serious effort to preserve and sustain it.

Generally, language in all its ramifications cannot exist in isolation just as human beings cannot be alone without interacting with one another. Consequently, no attempt should be made to supplant one language with another rather the languages should be made to play complementary roles.

The Federal Government of Nigeria should not only formulate relevant language policies like the one in the National Policy on Education (NPE), she should see to their full implementation so as to achieve the desired objectives.

Again, there is need to review the Nigerian school curricula especially with regard to the teaching of indigenous

languages vis-à-vis English language. To this regard, adequate time or attention should be accorded to the Nigerian languages in the curriculum planning, scheduling and pedagogical approaches.

There should be a change of attitude among the Nigerians who exhibit negative attitude towards their mother tongues, as it is quite unpatriotic. This situation calls for more enlightenment on the part of government and linguistic scholars so as to correct to wrong impression.

Nigerian government should be relentless in her effort to ensure that an indigenous lingua franca is fashioned out, as this is the only way she can attain true independence and sovereignty. To this regard, we can borrow a leaf from the Indian experiment. As observed by Igboanusi (2002:110), after gaining independence in 1949, the Federal Government of India (a country with about 800 languages) adopted Hindi in place of English as the official language of the Federation. Hindi was one of the most widely used languages, especially in the Northern part of India. Perhaps, one of the three major Nigerian languages – Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba could as well serve the same purpose if properly handled.

The Linguistic scholars should take it as challenge to carry our detailed and extensive research or investigation with regard to finding out the accurate number of languages that exist in Nigeria. This will guide language planners to map out strategies for their proper documentation, popularization and possible development. Moreover, continued reliance on speculations can be very misleading.

Furthermore, the great importance being attached to English language in our educational and governmental institutions which has immensely enhanced the status of the language and which has also seriously diminished the status of indigenous languages should be reviewed. For instance, as we have the use of English as a compulsory general course in

universities and tertiary institutions there should also be the use of any of the major Nigerian languages depending on the environment.

Nonetheless, to ensure efficiency in the implementation, the language provision of the National Policy on Education (NPE) should be restructured to make it mandatory for every Nigerian child to learn his mother tongue in addition to any of the major languages.

1.5 Conclusion

This discussion has been focusing on Nigeria which is a geo-political entity with a diversity of indigenous cultures, including languages.

In essence, it has painstakingly examined the introduction of The English language into the nation's multi-ethnic and multilingual society and how it has impacted upon the development of our indigenous languages, both negatively and positively.

In the process, we discovered that the great importance being attached to the use of English and which has been highly detrimental to the growth and development of the local languages is not unconnected with the high regard and attention being accorded it by the governmental and educational institutions.

To ameliorate the situation, we have proffered some suggestion which if favourably considered will go a long way in facilitating the growth and development of Nigerian languages.

Conclusively, for the Nigerian languages to be properly developed and take their pride of place, both the government and the individuals should develop strong positive attitude towards them and they should also be used to conduct national affairs, more so as they are means of preserving

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11. Globalisation and the Survival of Minority Languages: The Case of the Ogu Language

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Languages are not simply means of communication; they also serve as markers of ethnic identity. Yet, pursuits of economic advancement and commerce have rendered many speakers of minority languages dependent on global languages such as English in Nigeria. This occurrence has led to language shift, attrition, loss or even death of some minority languages. This negative impact of globalisation has been variously reported in the literature. In this paper, I argue that as human rights activists are untiringly protecting the rights of humans, protection of linguistic rights should be pursued by linguists. This paper posits that globalization, being a natural phenomenon, could aid the development of minority languages. The framework for this study is UNESCO's ethnolinguistic vitality/endangerment assessment tools. Data obtained for this study were drawn from 300 purposively selected respondents of diverse ages, occupation and educational background. The study employed the use of questionnaire, complemented by participant observation, and structured interview. I submit that globalisation is not the major cause of language endangerment. The paper recommends an awareness of language endangerment, a change in attitude towards the mother tongue and intensified

efforts at the revitalisation of minority languages in Nigeria. This will encourage a positive attitude especially from the younger generation who are the major group caught in this web. This study discusses the Ogu language which is a minority language spoken in Badagry region of Lagos State in Nigeria, its vitality, and how it can be revitalised to be relevant in this digital age.

Key Words: Globalisation, Minority Languages, Ogu language Vitality, Badagry, Revitalisation.

0. Introduction

Out of the estimated over 6,000 languages spoken around the globe experts have indicated that half of these languages will not survive into the next century. This phenomenon will eventually lead to a loss of linguistic and cultural heritage. Traditional knowledge, philosophy and the world view, transmission of traditional values and even medicine will become increasingly endangered especially for minority languages, in a globalized world.

According to United Nations Environment Programme, there are 5,000 to 7,000 spoken languages in the world with 4,000 to 5,000 of these classed as indigenous, used by native tribes. More than 2,500 are in danger of immediate extinction and many more are losing their link with the natural world becoming museum pieces rather than living languages. Garland (2006) also reports that “Languages have been disappearing steadily, with 3,000 of the world’s language predicted to disappear in the next 100 years”.

This calls for a great attention from linguists, language speakers, enthusiasts and governments. According to Rita

Iszak, the UN independent expert on minority issues holds that languages should be preserved because they are central element and expression of identity and of key importance on the preservation of group identity. Despite this affirmation, it is saddening to note that while English and the other major languages expand their territories, dominating other languages, minority languages have continued to suffer.

This setback has invariably led to the erroneous conclusion that globalization is a threat to minority languages. However, we maintain that globalization is not a language killer as there are several other functions that languages perform among a people. Globalization is actually advantageous to the minority languages for creating an awareness of their endangerment. Moreover, Crystal (2000) advocates the use of endangered languages in electronic technology as one way of reversing language shift. Garland (2006), to this end, also posits that it is possible for globalization and new technology to safe-guard cultural identity while simultaneously allowing free exchanges of ideas and goods.

1. Review of Literature

Several opinions have been expressed on the term 'minority'. Some of these include (Markey 1987, Adegbija 1994, 1997, Nelde 1997) among others.

Markey (1987:8) is of the opinion that no language willingly chooses a minority status for itself "or willingly places itself on the endangered species list, or knowingly commits linguistics hara-kiri". Nelde (1987) on his part, rejects the use of the term 'minority.' Firstly, in his view, minority implies a group discriminated against, stigmatized or perhaps suppressed. Secondly, because of its low prestige, it could be a

handicap for social and economic advancement in professional life. Thirdly, the language is not employed as a useful means of communication in public life. Fourthly, there is functional restriction to daily use of the language which consequently limits its use to family domain. Lastly, such languages are usually neglected. (Nelde 1997:32-42). Pattanayak (1981) distinguishes between a 'minority' and 'minor' language in relation to power. According to him, minority languages are "small group languages plus power whereas minor languages are small group languages minus power (Adebija 1997:7). To Adebija (1997:8) minority languages can be referred to as 'smaller – population language' which lacks among others genuine national or economic presence (Adebija 1997).

Thus, the minority language is largely discriminated against and neglected in the national, regional or even local scheme of things. Adebija therefore postulates certain characteristics of minority languages. To him they are comparatively or absolutely small in relation to the size of the population, they tend to be on the endangered-languages list; they tend to suffer national as well as regional and local neglect; small-population language group "generally tend to be a handicap for social and economic advancement in professional life and are generally not very useful vehicles of communication in the public life of the nation concerned". Adebija (1997:150) hence he prefers the term 'underdevelopment'.

Odebunmi (2007) also defines a minority language as that language which is located within a community where a majority language is spoken. This refers to the proportion of the speakers to the total population. He opines that speakers

of minority languages are usually denied several social, economic and political benefits. These definitions suggest that languages are termed 'minority' because of their demographic inferiority but more significantly because of their exclusion from public functions and their low social status.

There are basically two schools of thoughts on globalization and minority languages. These are the pro-globalisation and the anti-globalisation schools. The first group believes that globalization is harmless and the other maintains that it has a debilitating effect. Movius (2002) examines the effect of globalization on traditional communication theories. He opines that, although, globalization may be studied from the economic and political points of view, the media mainly focuses on the culture aspects. He argues that despite the recent spread of globalization, cultural differences are still evident around the globe. Mufwene (2002) posits that rather than viewing the world's major languages as the killer languages, only local globalization has endangered or driven most languages to extinction. Linking language endangerment to colonization and globalization, he argues that even local populations have somewhat gained from language shift and that language endangerment or extinction takes place under 'peaceful conditions, through insidious process of assimilation'. (Mufwene 2002: 162). He concludes that the future of languages in the 21st century depends on their socio-economic strength. He therefore argues for the provision of ecologies that support language totality. Mufwene and Vigouroux (2006) argue that "all languages are adequately equipped to serve the traditional communicative needs of their speakers" because the spread of European languages around the world

is not to play communicative role among the indigenes. Despite this assertion, Mufwene (2002) maintains that speakers' effective interactions with people of other tribes are also major considerations in alternative language choices. Here, again he maintains that "regional lingua franca" and urban vernaculars have led to language atrophy as evidenced today which he referred to as 'globalization.

Walker (2011) examines the teaching of Frisian, a minority language in Germany. His study area was the University of Kiel, Germany. He remarks that multilingualism is encouraged in the study programme for three major reasons; namely the acquisition of Frisian dialects, the promotion of the prestige of the various students' mother tongues, and to afford the students opportunity of a natural multilingual communication. According to Monajemi (2003) the major enemies to endangered cultures and languages are new communication technologies and transportation and that globalization does not necessarily negate communication in local or natural languages. He challenges language speakers to adapt to globalization which has become an imperative for survival.

In this line of thought is Agwuele (2010) who argues that it is pointless trying to save endangered languages in a globalized setting. She maintains that there is no need safeguarding a language that lacks functionalism. In this sense, a language that does not serve its speakers well in the sense of not functionally guaranteeing them the ability to survive; either, socially, politically, economically, etc. (especially in a globalized world) can be rejected for another by the speakers. When they do, their rejected language should not be saved. This is actually the view of the anti-revitalization group.

2. The linguistic situation in Nigeria

The linguistic situation in Nigeria is a very complex one. This stems primarily from the problem of distinguishing between languages and dialects. According to *Ethnologue* (2009), there are 527 languages in Nigeria and about 250 ethnic groups break down as follows: Yorùbá 21%, Hausa and Fulani 20%, Igbo (Ibo) 18%, Ijaw 10%, Kanuri 4%, Ibibio 3.5%, and Tiv 2.5%.⁶ Hausa, Igbo, and Yorùbá are the three major languages, Edo, Efik (Ibibio) Fulfude, Idoma, Igala, Ijo, Kanuri, Nupe and Tiv would be classified as medium while about 80% of the others are regarded as minor languages.

In terms of numerical strength, Awonusi (2007) grouped Nigerian languages into three categories. The Decamillionaire languages are Hausa, Igbo and Yorùbá languages. They are multi-million speaker languages and function both as local lingua franca and as regional or state languages in the areas where they are spoken. The languages are Edo, Efik (Ibibio) Fulfude, Idoma, Igala, Ijo, Kanuri, Nupe and Tiv. The Minor Languages are those spoken as mother tongue in communities but are hardly used in education. Some of these languages are going into extinction e.g. the Koma language in Adamawa state,¹ Bassa –Kotagora, Bete, and Shau languages.

The Hausa language is spoken as a first language by about 12 million people¹ who can be found in Sokoto, Kaduna, Katsina, Kano, Bauchi, Gombe, and Kebbi States in the Northern parts of the country. It is a lingua franca, not only in the North but has also spread to other states in the country. In addition, as many as 8 million people speak Hausa as a

¹ *Federal Republic of Nigeria official Gazette published in May 2007 accessed July 2007*. Moths range, across Nigeria/Cameroon border. Retrieved May 24, 2011, from Wikipedia.

second language, totalling 20 million speakers in Nigeria alone. It is actually more than this now. Hausa is a teaching subject in education, right from the primary to the university level, in Nigeria. Hausa is used extensively in the North for local administration, such as in local council meetings, the local (alkali) courts and at meetings in the rural palaces. Hausa is also spoken outside the country, as we have in Voice of America (VOA).

Although Yorùbá is the second largest language in Nigeria (Ilesammi 2004:36), it is the largest single ethnic group in Nigeria with a population of about twelve million out of the total population of about 100 million Nigerians. In education, Yorùbá is a language to reckon with. It is a medium of instruction in the lower primary school and it is taught as a subject up to the university level. Yorùbá is also studied outside Nigeria. Adewole (2007) avers that whereas there are ten universities where Yorùbá is being taught as a course in Nigeria; these are UNILAG, LASU, TASUED, OOU, UI, EKSU, UNILORIN, AAU, OAU, ADEYEMI, more than sixteen universities in the United States are teaching the language. Yorùbá serves as the *lingua franca* in the Western part of Nigeria. It is the language of the mass media. It is widely used in the literature, in adult education, in public administration.

The Igbo language is the dominant language in the Eastern part of Nigeria. Igbo is also used at the lower primary education and it is studied as a course up to the university level and in adult education. The Igbo population is put at 18% of the total Nigeria population. The language is also used in local admini-

stration.

3. The Ogu language as a Case Study

The Ogu language is the mother tongue of the Ogu people who inhabit the Badagry area of Lagos State. Badagry is a border town, leading to other countries such as The Republic of Benin, Togo, Ivory Coast, Ghana and the likes. This has facilitated great commercial activities in the area. Besides, the area is also known for its widespread multilingualism. Even with the abolition of the slave trade, the role of Badagry in commercial activities is still very prominent (Adeniyi and Bello 2008). The Agbalata international market is a rallying point for traders of all kinds of goods and from different backgrounds. Therefore, Badagry is home to several languages. Apart from Ogu, the mother-tongue, other languages spoken include Yorùbá, Hausa, Igbo and French. There is a high incidence of mixed marriages between the Ogu and Yorùbá which has resulted widespread bilingualism and biculturalism. The multilingual nature of Badagry has led to the increasing use of English and Yorùbá in the area. The primary roles played by the mother tongue are being competed for by these major languages used in the community. Onadipe-shalom (2013) research reveals that most indigenes acquire the Yorùbá language in their homes. This is usually the situation in large cities where many ethno-linguistic groups coexist (Oyetade 1995).

4. Theoretical Framework

This research is anchored on ethnolinguistic vitality. Giles et al. (1977) maintain that ethnolinguistic vitality refers to socio-structural factors that affect “a group’s ability to behave and

survive as a distinct and active collective identity within multilingual settings". These socio-structural factors are a group's demographic, political, economic and cultural resources, or 'capital' within the multilingual setting (Landry and Bourhis 1997:32). Edwards (1992), also gives eleven factors that can influence ethnolinguistic vitality across three different levels. These are demography, sociology, linguistics, psychology, history, politics (including law and government), geography, education, religion, economics and media. Bourhis (1979) distinguishes between the sociolinguistic and the social psychological determinants of language behaviour between people of the same ethnic group and those of the out-group. Sociolinguistic factors are then sub-divided into micro sociolinguistic and macro-socio-linguistic. The micro socio-linguistic examines language behaviour along "topic, setting and purpose of conversation as well as characteristics of the interlocutors". Bourhis (1979:119). The social psychological determinants explain why speakers choose the language they speak. This can be influenced by mood, emotions, loyalty to the ethnic group, and the values attached to the local languages among others. Macro- socio-linguistic factors refer to the description of the situation among the linguistic groups in terms of diglossia and bilingualism language planning and language legislation. Anderson (1979) notes that sometimes, ethnolinguistic groups do not place emphasis on their mother tongues because of their affiliations to different religious organisations. Examples of such are the Prairie provinces. Anderson (1979) explains that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada and the Russian Orthodox Church have maintained different linguistic identification. Moreover, the Ukrainian Church has consistently refused to adopt the English language

in her liturgy because little more than half of its members speak Ukrainian. Anyanwu (2010) observes that language use could be for identification or instrumental purposes. While the former is indicated for a local language or an individual's first language, the latter is simply used in inter-personal relationship. In view of this, Anyanwu goes further to state that it is imperative to investigate whether language choice is motivated by ethnic identification or desire to meet communicative needs only.

Sankoff (2003) reveals that the speakers' desire to project their identity is the main factor in language choice and behaviour. His study of language use in Valencia, a community in Spain reveals the speakers' determination to use Castilian more than the Valencia language which is more prestigious. This collaborates Anderson's (1979) argument that language is not the sole determinant of ethnic identity and also indicates that the loss of a language does not automatically signify the demise of a race or culture.

5. An assessment of the Ogu language

Brenzinger et al. (2003), provide varied factors by which an endangered language can be identified (cf. Lewis, (2006). This was the outcome of the meeting of the *ad hoc* Expert Group on Endangered Languages convened by the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Unit. These factors were set as assessment scales for the evaluation of the vitality/ endangerment of a language in order to adopt measures to reverse it. This would only be applicable after a small-scale language use survey has been conducted. Although there are other models of assessing a language endangerment /vitality, the UNESCO tool shows a language comparative strengths and its problematic areas.

Factors 1 – 6 evaluate a language's vitality and state of endangerment while 7 – 8 assess language attitude. These factors are:

- i. Inter-generational language transmission
- ii. Absolute number of speakers
- iii. Proportion of speakers within the total population
- iv. Loss of existing language domains
- v. Response to new domains and media
- vi. Materials for language education and literacy
- vii. Governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies.
- viii. Community members' attitudes towards their own language.
- ix. Amount and quality of documentation.

In the following section, we proceed to evaluate the degree of vitality/ endangerment of the Ogu language in the light of these factors. Ofulue (2012) assesses the language based on only the home domain. However, this does not provide a comprehensive report of the linguistic situation in the area since only a general overview can present the domains where the language is thriving and where maintenance efforts should be intensified. In view of this, we present our data since this will serve as reference point to our discussion.

6. Data analysis.

6.1. Demographic information

Table 1. *Distribution of Respondents by Sex*

Sex	No	%
Male	144	48
Female	156	52
Total	300	100

Table 2. *Distribution of Respondents by Age*

Age	No	%
20 years and below	113	37
21-30	60	20
31-49	75	25
50 +	52	17.5
Total	300	100

Table 3. *Distribution of Respondents by their Educational Level*

Formal Education	No	%
Nil	18	6
Primary	36	12
Secondary	174	58
Post-secondary	72	24
Total	300	100

6.2 Place of acquisition

Table 4. *Place of acquisition of Yorùbá*

Place of Acquisition	No	%
At home	260	86.6
At school	30	10.0

Neighbourhood	10	3.33
Elsewhere outside the town	-	-
Total	200	100

6.3. Frequency of use of Ogu, Yorùbá and English languages in Badagry town

Table 5. *Frequency of Use of Ogu, Yorùbá and English Languages in Badagry Town*

	Eng		Ogu		Ogu+Yor		Yor		Yor + English		Ogu + English	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Always	132	44	215	71.7	228	76	204	68	179	60	207	69
Some-times	69	23	47	15.7	60	20	51	17	81	27	59	20
Hardly	72	24	23	7.6	12	4	45	16	25	8.3	22	7
Never	27	9	15	5	-	-	-	-	15	5.0	12	4
Total	300	100	300	100	300	100	300	100	300	100	300	100

7. Discussion

- a. *Inter-generational transmission:* Ogu can be regarded as being in grade 1 'safe' since it is used by all ages. However, our study shows that it is employed more by the adult population, as children speak Ogu more with their grandparents than with their parents, siblings and friends. A general awareness in language endangerment should be created in order to change the phenomenon. Although Ofulue (2012) argues that there is no language shift or loss in the area, our data suggest the opposite.
- b. *Absolute number of speakers:* This refers to the total number of speakers. This will require, in addition, a

reference date, a source and the reliability of the source should be recorded. The population of the Ogu people in Nigeria is 259,000 as at 2000 (Lewis 2009). Although the census figures for 2006 puts the Badagry population at 241,093 (Wikipedia 2010), yet there is a decline in the number of speakers.

- c. *Proportion of speakers within the total reference group:* This is an important factor in determining language vitality than absolute number of speakers. The Ogu language is spoken by a majority of the Badagry residents. However, because the adult population constitutes majority among the speakers, many of the children do not have proficiency in the language. The children of the educated are mostly affected here. Where the language is spoken, there are glaring evidence of code – switching and language attrition. Six classifications are provided under this and Ogu can be said to be in grade 3, i.e. the third degree of endangerment since a majority speak the language in the community.
- d. *Loss of existing language domains:* The language assessors determine where, with whom and the range of the topic for which the language in question is used. The more a language is used the stronger it is. The new domains refer to use in schools, work environment, new media and the internet. These avenues usually expand the scope of a language. But some communities only promote the dominant language. Under this factor, Ogu is in the third degree of endangerment since the dominant languages, Yorùbá and especially English have crept into several homes. The Ogu

language is competing keenly with English and Yoruba languages. Most people are exposed to the Yorùbá language from childhood. Our study shows that 86.3%, 10%, and 3.33% of our respondents acquired Yorùbá, at home, at school and in the neighbourhood respectively. The Ogu language is not used in schools and does it have any official status in work places. In social functions, the use of English and Yorùbá are still visible. Even at communal gatherings of Ogu indigenes, and in religion the Yorùbá language plays a significant role, except in traditional religions where the role of Ogu is prominent. The Yorùbá language at present has penetrated even the exclusive domains of Ogu and several other domains as in religion and market.

- e. *Response to new domains and media:* Our investigation on this reveals that Ogu is used in the media although sparingly. The language can be heard in selected media houses, for example, in the state radio station, Radio Lagos, for news broadcast and transmission of few programmes. Despite this, it is pathetic to note that Ogu enjoys only 20% of the total programmes. The situation is worsened by the commercialization going on in the station. The use of the language in the media is very minimal when compared to the number of Yorùbá presentations on the radio. Very few adverts in Ogu are available as well as limited number of news broadcast. In all, it could be said that the language can only be said to be 'coping' since it is used in some new domains.

- f. *Materials for language education and literacy*: This examines the use of the language in education. When there is enough provision for educational materials in the language, the language is scored 5. A fair assessment would be to place Ogu under grade 2. This is because its orthography is yet to be codified. The language can boast of some literary texts such as primers and short stories which are yet to be introduced in education since the language is not recognized either as a subject or a medium of instruction on schools.
- g. *Community Members' Attitudes towards their Own Language*: This captures the speakers as well as the attitudes of outsiders towards the language community. If government policies favour the use of only the dominant languages then minority languages would be endangered but favourable policies would enhance the vitality of the language. Omo-Ojugo (2004), notes that members of a community do not always display a neutral attitude towards their language but may exhibit a positive or negative attitude to their mother tongue. In addition, (Oyetade, 2007) observes that there could even be a "spilt commitment" to the languages involved. A survey of the attitudes towards ethnic identity reveals that most members support language maintenance. Results show that 96% of our respondents indicate that "Ogu is the most prestigious language", while most respondents hold that they listen to news broadcast in English instead of Yoruba or Ogu languages. These attitudes reflect the reality of the

present situation and the effect of globalization. While they display a positive attitude in wanting their language to survive, they do not want to be left uninformed about happenings around the globe.

- h. *Governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies:* This relates to the attitude of the community members of the language in question. A positive attitude is essential for a vital language. It is important to note that there has never been a time in history that the native Ogu populace has been distinctively addressed by government. In the earlier times, prior the introduction of local government administration, the town was referred to as 'Ogu-Awori district'. At present the Local Government carries out policies as dictated by the State and Federal Government. Moreover, the Ogu language has no official status within the state, though it is the second main language spoken in Badagry. Even within the local government council, the predominant use of English and Yorùbá is glaring. Government activities in the state have encouraged 'passive assimilation' since there is no explicit policy for the language.
- i. *Amount and quality of documentation:* This is an important factor because it relates to the urgency of the situation. This factor allows communities or the government to see the need for documentation and standardisation. Production of these materials would go a long way in sustaining the language. A careful assessment reveals that the Ogu language is at the

fragmentary level. Hence, there is an urgent need for a proper documentation and standardization of the language. Today, many communities are experiencing language loss at an alarming rate which unfortunately leads to loss of culture and identity. Even when the language is documented to prevent total death, this cannot serve as language *per se*. This is the view of May (2012:1). Here he expresses that “valuable as such items are they are not the language itself”.

Table 6. *Summary of evaluation of Ogu language vitality/ endangerment*

<i>Factors</i>	<i>Rating</i>
Inter-generational language transmission	Grade 1. Safe. This is because the language is used across all age groups although in varying proportions.
Absolute number of speakers	241,093. (Wikipedia 2010)
Proportion of speakers within the total population	
Loss in existing language domains	Grade 3. Dwindling domains. Dominant languages have crept into several homes.
Response to new domains and media	Grade 2. The language is coping since it is used in some new domains and media, e.g. Radio Lagos, Paramount F.M and OGBC.

Materials for education and literacy	Grade 2. The language is coping. The language lacks a standard orthography and is not used in education.
Official status and use: Governmental and institutional language, attitude, policies	Grade 3. The government encourages passive assimilation, as there is official policy for Ogu in the state. Meanwhile, the dominant languages are used in the public domains.
Community members' attitudes towards their own language	Grade 4. Almost all members display a [positive attitude. 96% of our respondents support the use of the language.
Amount and quality of documentation	Grade 2. Fragmentary.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

Insights from the study of globalization, portend great implication on the survival of minority languages in Nigeria. However, this paper argues that it is a welcome development because it can serve as a catalyst to the development of these languages. When explored, globalisation can spring up literacy and educational materials, and therefore also enhance economic advancement and job creation. To this end, the following are our recommendations for the survival of minority languages in a globalized worlds and the Ogu language in particular.

There should be an active use of the Ogu language especially in the home domains. Parents should ensure the inter-generational transfer of the mother-tongue so as to avoid extinction. Although some studies have advocated the increased use of the mother tongue by mothers, we advocate

its use by both parents. The father as the head of the family, especially in mixed homes can insist that the children speak the language. Parents can also cultivate the habit of telling folktales or reading stories to the children in the language. The importance of the family to language maintenance has been stressed in Fishman (2004). According to him, other domains and efforts are ineffective until the language finds functionality within the family. This view is also held by Yamamoto (2005), Tannenbaum (2002), and Ofulue (2012). These studies maintain the vital role of the family in language maintenance. Research of this type insists that “the family interventions can help to ensure the continued vitality of vernacular languages or increase the pace at which those languages are edged out by others.” (Dyers 2008:114)

It is also imperative to emphasize the implementation of Nigeria’s National Policy of Education. Although the policy recognizes the minority languages in education, the Fishman argues that education is also important in language survival. He, Fishman (1980: 169) posits that ‘unless they are entirely withdrawn from the modern world, minority ethno linguistic group needed to be literate in their mother tongue’. To this end, we recommend bilingual education, especially in schools within the Local Government. The Lagos State Ministry of Education should incorporate within the school curriculum, the teaching of Ogu in our schools- both in the primary and secondary schools especially in the entire Badagry Local Government. The introduction of Ogu in schools would lead to the training of teachers for this purpose. It will also boost the publication of educational materials in the language. Our findings reveal that the study of French is taken very seriously not only in this town but in the entire Local Government. Our

observation reveals that even National Anthem is rendered in French in some schools in the area. If children are exposed to the language at school, they will develop interest in learning it. Exposure to the language at school will also create a positive attitude.

The role of the media is also very crucial in this era of globalisation. Air-time allocated to the language on the Radio and Television, as well as publications in the Newspapers will boost the language prestige. In this respect, the state-owned Radio Lagos, FM and Lagos Television should improve on their coverage of the language, its people and culture. In addition, policy makers and leaders in the community can take crucial steps in the media to ginger ethnic consciousness of the people. Moreover, since the Lagos State House of Assembly adopted the use of Yorùbá for their proceedings on Thursday, we strongly recommend the use of the Ogu language in the Local Council at least once in a week. This is in line with the UNESCO declaration that every 21st day of February should be marked as the International Mother-Language Day.

The positive impact globalisation on minority languages was envisaged in Crystal (2011). Here, crystal proposes four major means of engaging the public in creating an awareness of language endangerment, namely: the media, the arts, internet, and the school curriculum. The use of the media and the internet for safeguarding endangered languages points to the fact that globalization when harnessed can be an advantage to minority languages. There is no doubt that if these various avenues are explored, minority languages would still thrive even in this age of globalization. UNESCO (2003:21) affirms that “we all share the responsibility of

ensuring that no language will disappear and that all languages will be maintained and perpetuated into the future generations”.

The Ogu language speakers themselves must be ready to reawaken their language. Emenanjo (2008:581) states that "small or minority languages do not stand any chance of survival or empowerment except the native speakers of such languages have robust plans or programmes for revitalizing their languages". Moreover, policy makers can identify the various domains where the use of the language is diminishing and then reinforce language use in such areas. This is in line with Fishman (2001). On reversing language shift, he states that it becomes easier to recommend solutions to language shift only when we can identify the problems associated with it. Also, Oyetade (2003) and Fakuade (2004) argue that one of the strategies for saving endangered languages is the creation of more agencies for language maintenance and development.

As it is with other states, Ogu can become a state language in Lagos, if government policy allows it. This will go a long way maintaining the language in years to come. This is in line with Romaine (2002), where she argues that legal provision is another way of ensuring the survival of languages.

Finally, concerted efforts in terms of awareness campaign, standardized orthography and introduction of some of these languages in schools should be made both by the community leaders, linguists and government.

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12. The Peculiar Challenges of SMT to African Languages

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The challenges of Machine translation (MT) have been identified and classified but the classification did not consider the peculiarities of African languages. This paper therefore explores the challenges of MT and reclassifies them in relation with the uniqueness of African languages. The study uses the Yorùbá language as a template for other African languages and identifies some of the peculiarities of African languages which include the fact that they are resource-scarce languages; dycritization, demarcation of discipline, and funding, amongst others. The paper recommends measures to overcome some of these challenges.

Keywords: Machine Translation, African Languages, NLP Challenges, Yoruba

1. Introduction

Awobuluyi (2010:34-35) identifies Machine Translation as one of the significant contributions of Linguistics to technology and ICT:

... another operation which researchers would like computer to be able to perform. That operation is known as machine translation, and as its name implies, it involves getting computers to translate well-formed and fully idiomatic written expressions in one language into well-formed and equally idiomatic corresponding

expression in another language... (Awobuluyi 2010:34-35)

However, the application of language technology to African languages is relatively new and most efforts seem to be incidental. The most consistent efforts motivated and guided by national policy come from South Africa while projects in other countries are based primarily on private initiatives (Adegbola 2009). It is unfortunate that concerted effort is not given to the development of Machine Translation (henceforth MT) in Africa like American and European countries. This may be as a result of the fact that African tribes and kingdoms have been relating with themselves before colonization, therefore translation is not seen as a serious business and does not pose a serious threat to security. However, Odoje (2010) enumerated the needs for MT particularly for Nigerian languages because of the multi-lingual situation of the nation and the necessity of the inclusion of none speakers of English in the main stream of global activities ranging from politics, government policies, trade and commerce, to research and religion with the use of ICT.

ICT impact in a developing nation like Nigeria cannot be undermined. ICT provides developing nations with an unprecedented opportunity to meet vital development goals such as poverty reduction, basic healthcare, and education, far more effectively than before. Nations that succeed in harnessing the potential of ICT can look forward to greatly expand economic growth, dramatically improved human welfare, a stronger form of democratic government (Kamssu, Siekpe and Elizy 2004). All these are achievable only if the language of ICT is not predominantly dominated by English

language and if it does MT should help to be a bridging gap. Therefore, the inclusion of African languages in the ICT or the use of MT in relation with the ICT will not just include the excluded but the majority will not be dominated by the privileged minority who could use English proficiently as observed by Bamgbose (2005:22) that:

... good governance cannot be achieved unless those who make laws at all levels of government and those who implement them can function maximally in a language they are proficient in and can understand what their right and obligations are. *As long as the language of governance is accessible only to the educated elite, majority of citizens will be excluded, thereby making nonsense of participatory democracy. Consequently, the only viable alternation is for Nigerian languages to be used in many domains hitherto dominated by English language. (Emphasis mine)*

Though the translation of MT may not be perfect as the research in the field shows now, but at least it gives the users an idea of the content of foreign text as could be observed in the MT translations online. However, efforts have been made to develop MT for African languages exploring different kind of approaches to MT.

2. English-Yorùbá MT

Awofolu (2002) adopts rule based approach to MT because he claimed that Yoruba electronic resources were scarce. JAVA was used to code the structure of both Yorùbá and English sentences. Rowland (1969) *Teach Yourself Yoruba* was used as a

base for grammatical information incorporating spellchecker and statistical analyzer on neighboring word lexical categories. The work was indeed a pacesetter using syntactic and semantic analyzing algorithms but the concern is the structure of the sentences and linguistic feature of the lexical entries having known the deficiency of *Teach Yourself Yoruba* in the light of books like Awobuluyi (1978) Bamgbose (1990) and current syntactic findings. The report did not also discuss how structural and word ambiguities were handled by the machine since this is one of the major challenges of rule-based MT.

Another noticeable Yorùbá-English MT is Sunday (2008). The work was on interlinear translation. The total number of equivalent words is 1000 each for both Yoruba and English. The data were collected from Yorùbá Metalanguage (second edition), a dictionary of Yorùbá, Encarta eDictionary, Oxford Advanced learners' Dictionary (6th edition), a dictionary of synonyms and antonyms, and Yoruba mini multimedia dictionary. Visual Basic 6.0 was used as programming language and Ibadan Ayo SIL Charis-Alt-I font was used for inputting Yorùbá data and Microsoft served as the platform for the database design. However, the deficiency of Sunday (2008) is that the system can only translate at word level. Phrasal or sentential translation coupled with idiomatic or figurative expressions cannot be translated by the system. For instance, the system can translate (1a&b) but constructions like (1c) will not be translated by the system.

- | | | | |
|------|------------|----|----------------|
| 1 a. | ọmọ | => | child |
| b. | father | => | bàbá |
| c. | ọmọdúdúnáà | => | the dark child |

Our observation is that 2000 total lexical entries cannot represent the realities of the two languages involved. Besides morphology which was not incorporated into the system and is very important for a system of that nature for maximum output translation; we also observe that word may have more than one meaning based on the context of usage. For example University Press Nigeria PLC new bilingual dictionary (which is an ongoing project coordinated by Professor Kola Owolabi) shows the deficiency of not considering meaning in context in translation. For instance “keen” has 18 meanings against one meaning if not used in context. Consider example (2) below:

2. Keen => (i) le (ii) lile (iii) gbona (iv) gbigbona (v) mí mú (vi) ló yé (vii) oloye (viii) imọlára (ix) ifura (x) ní tara (xi) onítara (xii) niwàra (xiii) pípé (xiv) ní wàwára (xv) oníwàwára (xvi) jíjá fáfá (xvii) nímọ̀ (xviii) onímọ̀ as each of the words shows their meaning in the context below:
 - Nigeria versus Ghana football match will be a *keen* competition => ìdíjẹ bọ́ọ̀lù aláfẹ̀sẹ̀gbá láàárín orílẹ̀-èdè Nàìjíríà àti Gánà (Ghana) yóó jẹ́ ìdíjẹ *lílẹ̀/gbígboná*
 - The football match between Ghana and Nigeria will be very *keen* => ìdíjẹ bọ́ọ̀lù aláfẹ̀sẹ̀gbá láàárín Gánà àti Nàìjíríà yóó *le/gbóná* (gan-an/púpọ̀)
 - Olú is not very *keen* on the idea => Olú kò *nítara/ níwàhàwára/ níwàrà/ lóyẹ/ nímọ̀ púpọ̀ nípa èrò nàà*

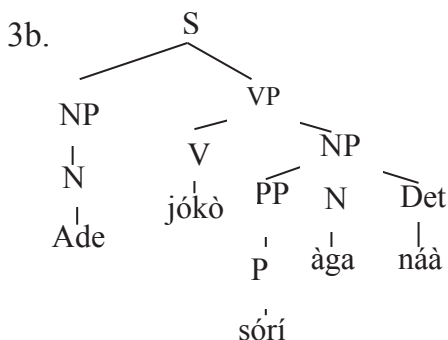
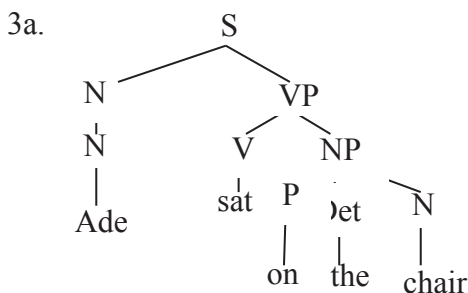
- I want a *keen* razor for my shaving => Mo fẹ́ abẹ́ mímú kan fún fífá irungbọ̀n mi
- Olú has a *keen* sense of smell => Olú ni ìmọ̀lára/ìfura ìgbọ́ òórùn
- He's a *keen* supporter of opposition party => ó jẹ́ onítara/oníwàńwára/olóye/onímọ̀/oníwàrà alátilẹ̀yìn (fún) ẹgbẹ́ alátaḱò.
- Even at the age of 90 my mother still has a keen mind => kòdà bí iyá mi tilẹ̀ jẹ́ ẹnì àádọ́rin ọdún, wọ̀n ọkàn jíjá fáfá (tí ó já fáfá)/ pípé.

Meaning in context like the above is very important so as not to lose any meaning in context like the interlinear software of Sunday (2008) will. Though it is highly recommended that the software be adopted for technical terms storage which will serve as an aid to professional and none professional translators. The software could be upgraded also to an online databank which will accommodate new entries as they are being discovered. It could also be adopted for a project like the ongoing compilation of the Yorùbá Metalanguage.

Odoje (2010) and Eludiora, Salawu, Odejobi and Agbeyangi (2011) intend to capture human language intuition in the computer for translation purposes using rule based approach. Odoje (2010) coded the sentence structure of Yoruba and English in Prolog. The system can generate sentences in each of the languages using finite rule to generate infinite sentences. It could also translate sentences though the word entries were very minimal and the word to be translated

must first exist in the system dictionary. One of the major deficiencies of the work is that it is not user-friendly. The users must be able to use Prolog before they can access it; therefore there is need for an interface so that it could be user-friendly. The system could not also translate idiomatic expression like *Ó ta térunípàá* the system will translate it to mean *he kicked the tarpaulin* instead of *he is dead/ he died*. Tonal manipulations which Yorùbá language is known for were not also captured.

Eludiora, Salawu, Odejobi and Agbeyangi (2011) adopted python for the rule-base MT. POS tags were used to identify the class of each lexical entry and parser parsed each sentence to its phrasal and word level categories. Just that the parsing could be high, for example consider (3a and b) extracted from Eludiora, Salawu, Odejobi and Agbeyangi's (2011).



Parsing of this type does not follow the linguistic structure of both languages and is rather confusing. What is considered as NP (object) is not headed by noun and one wonders why it is regarded as NP. How can a preposition head an NP? This is mis-informing. This even violates the principle of merging though we assume the writers used Standard Theory as the base of their analysis. Consequent on the above, there is an urgent need to review either the structure (2 above) or the whole paper. It should be noted that the difference in the structural head of noun phrase was achieved in that *my father* is not translated as *mi bàbá* but *bàbá mi*.

3. Statistical Machine Translation

This is an approach to MT using human translated materials of language pairs as corpus for computer to translate new sentences using probability. Och (2006) is of the view that there has been an enormous boom in MT research in recent years. There has been not only an increase in the number of research groups in the field and in the amount of funding, but there is now also optimism for the future of the field and for achieving even better quality. The major reason for this change has been a paradigm shift away from linguistic/rule-based methods towards empirical/data-driven methods in MT. This has been made possible by the availability of large amounts of training data and large computational resources. Other important factors have been the adoption of automatic evaluation techniques, organized evaluations, and the availability of elaborated tools for building systems. Today, using a data-driven approach, it is possible for a small research lab to build with moderate effort and publicly

available tools state-of-the-art MT systems that compete with or outperform state-of-the-art commercial systems. The best systems trained on large amounts of data are able to produce MT quality that is significantly superior to classical rule-based systems – as has been shown in various recent evaluations.

To Lopez (2008) SMT treats the translation of natural language as a machine learning problem. By examining many samples of human-produced translation, SMT algorithms automatically learn how to translate. He then observes that SMT has made tremendous strides in less than two decades, and new ideas are constantly introduced. Koehn (2010) believes that SMT has actually energized the field of Machine translation bring to reality the dream of automatic language translation closer to reality.

This approach to MT does not necessarily incorporate the linguistic knowledge or detail though Hassan (2009) opines that Phrase-Based SMT lacks the capacity to produce more grammatical translations and handling long-range reordering while maintaining the grammatical structure of translation output. He integrates syntactic structures into the system to produce more fluent MT output. He was of the opinion that syntax can help Phrase-based SMT systems to produce well-formed translation output by the use of syntactically-guided translation models, language models and reordering techniques.

Brown et al. (1990) explain that a statistical translation system requires a method for computing language model probabilities, a method for computing translation probabilities and a method for searching among possible source sentences S for the one that gives the greatest value for $\Pr(S) \Pr(T/S)$. Meaning that, if we want to translate Yorùbá sentence Y to

English sentence E , we have to look for the highest value for $\Pr(Y)$ given $\Pr(E/Y)$. To do this, Keohn (2010) stipulates that rules such as the chain rule or Bayes rule allow us to reformulate distributions. He explains further that interpolation allows us to compensate for poorly estimated distributions due to sparse data.

Therefore, to have a good SMT, there is need for a very large language corpus for language modeling probably adopting n-gram model for linguistic simple-minded for the language pairs. This enables the computer to identify the linguistic structure of the languages. It is however unfortunate that many of African languages have very little corpus required for an exercise of this nature. For example, the Yorùbá language has very few translated material reported by Awofolu (2002) and Odoje; so is Swahili (see Pauw, Wagacha and Schryver, 2011). Hence, there are very view Statistical Machine Translation in African languages and none in the Yorùbá language apart from this ongoing project. This is as a result of the fact that African languages are considered as resource-scarce from a language technological point of view (see Pauw, Wagacha and Schryver, 2011). Meaning that, African languages are languages that have small or economically disadvantaged user base which are typically ignored by the commercial world (Chan and Rosenfeld 2012).

4. Language Toolkit Systems

Language toolkit is a software or application for natural language processing usually to perform *sentence detection*, *tokenization*, *POS-tagging*, *text chunking*, *lemmatisation*, *coreference* analysis and resolution, *named-entity detection* among others¹. For SMT, the following are the software

available as open sources: Giza ++, Moses, Phrasal, cdec, Joshua, Jane, Pharaoh, etc. Moses is adopted for this research because it has an online discussion group where researchers discuss their challenges and seek help. It also has a website and its manual is readily available.

5. Challenges of Developing SMT

Och (2006) points out three significant challenges of SMT. The collection and the use of huge amount of data is the first challenge explained. He maintains that hundreds of billions of words and translation models trained on hundreds of millions of words will require very large computational resources, a corresponding software infrastructure, and a focus on systems building and engineering. The second challenge he made mention of is the need for new evaluation metric since the large corpus available now made it difficult for BLEU to distinguish MT output and human translation output on some standard data sets. While the third challenge is the SMT independence since currently, the best data-driven MT systems do not employ Natural Language Processing tools such as linguistic parsers, parts-of- speech taggers or explicit word sense disambiguation, and there have been very few success stories in integrating those components. As accurate as Och's observation is, African languages were not put into consideration while reaching this conclusion hence there is need to consider the challenges of SMT in the light of an African language

5.1. Peculiar Challenge to SMT for African Languages

Like Och (2006) observed, there is a need for very large corpus for data driven MT. This is lacking for many African

languages, for example, SMT translates better for specialized domains like hotel reservation, flight booking and safety instruction, and weather forecast etc than general domain; may be because of its limited words (see Koehn 2009 and Hutchins and Somers1992). It is observed that translation for these specialized domains are scarce at least for Nigerian languages. Egbokhare (2011) observe this particularly the need for local airplane to use Nigerian languages in Nigeria. He commented that:

One has heard it said that there are too many languages in Nigeria; hence, it will be virtually impractical to meet the needs of every group. This argument is specious because with five languages, English, Nigerian Pidgin, Hausa, Yorùbá and Igbo, the linguistics needs of over 90% of Nigerians can be met. Nigeria must insist that airlines address Nigerians in the languages they understand best and planes flying in our airspace must adhere to language requirement as part of airline safety requirement...

However, there are literary materials that have been translated basically for academic and social purposes. To achieve SMT for Yorùbá-English language, the following literary books were used

<i>Title of Book</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Translation Title</i>	<i>Translation Author</i>
Ògbójú Ọdẹ nínú Igbo Irúnmọlẹ̀	D. O. Fagunwa	The Forest of a Thousand Demons	Wole Soyinka

Igbó Olódùmarè	D.O. Fagunwa	The Forest of God	Gabriel Ajadi
Igbó Olódùmarè	D.O. Fagunwa	In the Forest of Olódùmarè	Wole Soyinka
Àdìtú Olodùmare	D. O. Fagunwa	The Mystery of God	Olu Ọbafemi
Aké: The Years of Childhood	Wole Soyinka	Aké Látì Ìgbà Èwe	Akinwùmí Ìsọlá

This leads to peculiar challenges of Yorùbá-English SMT

5.1.1 Lack of Online Data for SMT

Initially one thinks that Jehovah Witness website could have translated materials which could be used for this exercise but a visit to their website reveals that most of the Yorùbá materials on the website were not translated materials. Hence it is difficult to get online corpus like European Parliament documents available online at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/> and the available ones like in the table above are hard copies which need to be converted to soft copies for usage. In other words, there is no website where Yoruba-English translated equivalent material could be accessed today.

5.1.2. Orthography

Another challenge for Yorùbá-English SMT is the issue of orthography. Among the five books above, only the Aké's translation or otherwise language retriever as Isọlá calls it was the only book written in the new orthography, the rest were written in old orthography. This will greatly affect *tokenization* and language modeling if not converted to new orthography

which is consequently time consuming and capital intensive and may affect the translation of the machine. Getting a typist with the knowledge of new orthography to convert the hard copy to soft became a very hard nut to crack since none of the available typist has the required knowledge for the conversion.

5.1.3. Diacritization

Yorùbá, like many African languages, is a tone language which must be represented in the written form as well as other diacritic representations in the language. Many typists have just been using any symbol of their choice for the diacritics without standardization most especially using Unicode for any computer to recognize. Therefore, Yorùbá text typed by a typist could not be used because of this challenge since it was not typed in Unicode that can be recognized by Linux operating system.

5.2. Operating System

In this part of the world, Window Operating System is very common but our research findings shows that Moses is not usually run on Window. Therefore, Ubuntu which is a Linux operating system was used which took some time to learn before the process of building the system began. More so, the researcher does not have much knowledge of computational science.

5.3. Demarcation of Disciplines

Demarcation of academic disciplines as it is observed in Africa and Nigeria in particular denies to greater extent the collaboration that is needed for this kind of research, after all,

nobody can do it all.

5.4. Funding

Just as Adegbola (2009) reports, there is no funding for projects like this in Africa as is being done in other part of the world. This has not encouraged interested individuals or groups to join in the development of MT in Africa. If funding is available, it will be easy to source for equivalent translated material in their soft copies and get enough data for works of this nature.

6. Conclusion

With the peculiar challenges of developing SMT for Yorùbá and in general African languages identified above, there is need for a reclassification of the challenges of SMT generally which might give an insight to solving these challenges since African languages have features that can be of tremendous improvement to SMT generally if properly harnessed.

Note

1. For the list of language toolkit visit

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_natural_language_processing_toolkits

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14. Indigenising Emoticons for Language Revitalisation

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Nigerian languages are facing digital endangerment as a result of being sparsely used for communication on the internet. Studies have illustrated this endangerment with little attention paid to the use of indigenous emoticons on chat platforms as a solution to this unfavourable situation. Hence this study advocates the use of indigenous emoticons by way of revitalising Nigerian cultures and languages on the internet. Although there are already indigenous cultural emoticons available, they were found to have aesthetic value and entertainment value, but were lacking quality cultural competence/conscience value. This work therefore advocates for a more intentional approach to their design and creation, and a more robust effort to have them available for use. Ten emoticon stickers and four sets of emoticon stickers were derived, only as examples that underlie the paradigm in a bid to advocate for more. The schema theory was adopted as framework. The primary data, the proposed emoticons, were devised from existing indigenous knowledge systems: while secondary data were acquired from social media applications and internet statistics resources. Ethnographic information about indigenous knowledge of the cultures were acquired by participant observation. Emoticon smileys, stickers and emotext were analysed using the paradigms of aesthetics,

cultural competence and entertainment values.

1. Introduction

Omachonu (2004:221) states that an endangered language can be empowered by a renewed interest in culture. This suggests that language and culture have an intricate degree of interrelatedness. This is also highlighted by Emenajo (2007) who explains the symbiosis that exists between language and culture. The dynamism that exists between language and culture according to Emenajo (2007) is that the presence of one elicits the presence of the other. Therefore, considering that Indigenous Nigerian Languages have some degree of endangerment (Ugorji, 2005; Fabumi & Salawu, 2005; Fakoya, 2011; Oyetade, 2015.), this work is aimed their revitalisation (and thrive) via the doorway of a cultural revitalisation. This it does by proposing that indigenous culture emoticons be presented to the pool of social media users, which would serve as context and catalyst for the use of indigenous languages on internet social media and in synchronous computer mediated communication (also Chat/Instant messaging (IM)) as a precursor for expanded use in other domains.

A work such as this becomes necessary because society is in a constant flux, consequently the dynamics of the domains of human interactions are not exempt; therefore researches on language, endangerment, survival and thrive that may have served previous years, may not sufficiently serve in these times.

It therefore finds significance in that it joins a fine list of works concerned about the vitality of Nigerian languages. However, it goes a step beyond concern, or merely

emphasising the status of these languages by proffering a practical intervention. The emoticons designed in this work can be readily made available to the already available pool of internet users, therefore it does not have to rely on the government (for the most part) for implementation or permission for their use; because they are largely used in a primarily private sector driven domain. Indeed, their use may only be constrained by the limits of human creativity. Therefore, the solution proffered stands a good chance of success. This work also presents the idea of language revitalisation as not just a 'social' concept, but as one with cognitive implications. It presents a 'cognitio-social' approach to the concept of cultural revitalisation.

Two languages (Yoruba and Igbo language) were selected as languages of focus used representatively for indigenous Nigerian languages, as the issues are common to all (Fakoya, 2011).

2. Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Language

Indigenous knowledge systems¹ ²are a people's way of knowing things, they are the perspectives a people have about the world, and how they have configured themselves to fit their conception about the world. Every culture is formed by these ways of knowing. It determines their language, education, leadership, religion, cosmology, leisure, taboos, superstition, lies, truth, fears, dreams, hopes, and the like. These peculiar cultural factors emanate from a people in a bid to present a coherent explanation of their environment (their indigenous knowledge systems).

¹ Also IK

² Used interchangeably with Culture

Whether we talk about globalization, financial institutions, such as the World Bank and IMF, economic theories or models, intellectual and educational traditions, they are based on certain assumptions that are located in a cultural milieu, a worldview as well as knowledge system legitimized by cultural traditions and practices. Egbokhare (2014:6)

The opinion by Egbokhare (2014) above is that systems of whatever nature are undergirded by some cultural orientation. This obviously transcends just intellectual and economic traditions, the entertainment or “less-official” traditions of mundane human practices are likewise founded on some knowledge systems. The choice of which IK system to be subscribed to is dependent on the value of the system. Sadly, the value of the interest of Nigerian indigenous IK systems according to Egbokhare (2014:6) is “within the context of some exotic knowledge systems of backward and backward peoples who need to be carried along for development interventions and aid work to be accomplished”.

It therefore is pertinent that these indigenous Nigerian cultures be brought from the ‘back-burner’ to the fore, to showcase what Egbokhare (2014) refers to as their ‘prestige value’. Therefore, reinventing (not necessarily altering) these cultures (that undergird the languages) in the light of current and popular trends would expunge any perceptions of them as having a less privileged or even pitied role in the committee of cultures, and would encourage subscription to the languages these cultures are expressed in, as tools of communication. From the foregoing, this work draws significance, which is to explore an avenue where the

elements of the indigenous knowledge can be repositioned and reinvigorated to adjust to the current trends of expression, by integrating them into the burgeoning domain of internet social systems.

Communication takes place within a context, and according to Ochis (1979)³ context covers:

The social and psychological world in which the user operates at any given time... [the] language user's beliefs and assumptions about temporal, spatial and social settings; prior on-going and future actions and the state of knowledge and attentiveness of those participating in the social interaction at that.

Therefore, they are at every event of communication prevalent settings that could colour the tenor of what is expressed. The integration of indigenous knowledge elements into a domain will in a manner provide a context that will allow for indigenous language use (as culture and language are often symbiotic) (see Section 8.2. Therein simulated sentences showed the practicality of this position).

Egbokhare (2014:13) states that culture (IK) has three aspects:

- a. Modes of thought and processes of the mind (values, knowledge systems, conceptual world, beliefs, etc.).
- b. Material externalization (toys, tools, arts, etc.)
- c. Social distribution of meaning (social structure and processes, political systems, etc.)

³ Cf. Odebunmi 2007:2

A close look at the aspects of culture stated by Egbokhare (2014) shows that only the Material externalisation is tangible, it therefore should bear vestiges of the others aspects. The centrality of material externalisation is important to the thrust of this work. This is because the emoticons as would be seen, are material externalisations of particular cultures; the manifestation of which should covertly refer to other systems represented therein, and in line with the theoretical orientation this work adopts, serve as a trigger for the embedded concepts the emoticons underlie. As will be seen, it already is a reality that the available emoticons on social media and Chat platforms are undergirded by some IK.

3. Theoretical Framework

This work has adopted the Schema theory as framework. This section explains and justifies its use. The Schema theory is a cognitive theory that posits that all knowledge in the human brain is stored in various Schemata. A Schema is a network of knowledge elements, or network of elements of knowing. The schema theory has found application in psychology, cognitive linguistics and artificial intelligence (AI). A Schema then is a generalised description or a conceptual system for understanding knowledge – how knowledge is represented and how it is used. According to this theory, Schemata represent knowledge about concepts: objects and the relationship they have with other objects, situations, events, sequences of events, actions, and sequences of action. Individuals therefore have schema for everything they experience.

Casson (1983:430)⁴ describes a schema thus, “schemata are conceptual abstractions that mediate between stimuli received by sense organs and behavioural responses... [and] that serve as basis for all human processing”. Pritchard (2007:3) also states that a schema can be thought of as a theoretical multi-dimensional store for many millions of knowledge, a framework with numerous nodes and even more numerous connections between nodes. With each node having a discrete piece of information or idea which could be in different forms: an image, a sound, a smell, a feeling, an action, and more.

The schema theory accounts for the mental apparatus used to coordinate and relate knowledge elements in the brain, and which in a large manner helps organise our responses to situations. In addition, this schema *network* can be instantiated, activated or expanded by stimuli.

This agrees with the position held by Langacker (1987:59)⁵ that there is a:

Continuous scale of entrenchment in cognitive organization. Every use of a structure has a positive impact on its degree of entrenchment. Whereas extended periods of disuse have a negative impact. With repeated use, a novel structure becomes progressively entrenched, to the point of becoming a unit; moreover, units are in variably entrenched depending on the frequency of their occurrence.

Langacker’s (1987) opinion on entrenchment having a positive⁶ (progressive) impact on the said knowledge unit is

⁴ Cf. Brown, P (2006::96)

⁵ Cf. Schmid, H. (2007:118)

crucial to what we propose in this work. It therefore is important that if languages are to be revitalised there has to be a Progressive Positive Entrenchment (henceforth PPE). This work proposes that indigenous knowledge which underlies these languages be brought to the fore, to a domain where the ‘target audience’ are known to constantly congregate. As data would show, there is a high influx of Nigerians on social media, and there is already the issue of entrenchment of English language on social media. This according to Langacker’s *theory* of entrenchment would negatively affect other languages, because they would either be disused or suffer from greatly reduced use.

This work proposes that emoticons can serve as PPE context for indigenous languages. These emoticons offer ‘prestige (HIP⁷) value’ for cultures since it effectively ties indigenous knowledge systems with popular trends; thus, creating a favourable disposition towards indigenous culture (see Fig 3.1).

The initial contact a person has with a thing serves as a catalyst for (or instantiates) a schema, a knowledge unit; and any further contact with the particular ‘element’ further expands the schema. Therefore, the ‘contact points’ or the state of the schema an individual has about something determines largely the individual’s disposition towards such an ‘element’. An individual is more knowledgeable about an issue when such an individual’s schema is expanded about

⁶ However, this disposition may not always be positive, with regard to the subject matter as various factors like individual attitude often serve as determiners of attitude towards a language. However, there is no doubt that knowledge is directly proportionate to the degree of entrenchment.

⁷ The concept of *HIP* is quite representative the popular contemporary trends at any given time.

the said issue. This work proposes emoticons, as contact catalyst points.

The positions taken above are further reinforced by the perspective offered by Tuggy (2007:86-87) who states that Schematicity relations arise when *cognizers* compare mental structures and perceive similarities between them” and also states that “as mental comparisons and schematicity judgments of these sort are repeated saliently (Forcefully), in a person’s thinking, they become entrenched in his or her mind, and their reaction is thereby entrenched as usage events that presuppose or even assert them occur, their conventionality is established, and they become part of that subset of a person’s cognitive repertoire.

The internet and the social systems are greatly patronised by Nigerians, especially the younger generation. Therefore, the presence of these language stimulation externalizations of culture, would result in a rather *forceful* repetition; an ‘*in your face*’⁸ exposure.

The emoticons suggested in this work are undergirded by the cultural systems of these indigenous languages, tied up with popular trends, thus it reaches for intersecting points, to entrench and conventionalise the inter-relatedness between culture and modern trends.

The understanding that knowledge is organised in units (schema) can best provide a platform for the understanding of how languages can be revitalised, through a popularly trending medium, by integrating aspects of indigenous culture, as a means towards activating or entrenching the desired impact.

⁸ Internet lingo: which roughly translates to carrying out an act irrespective of the ‘receiver’s’ opinion.

Schmid (2007:118) states that “Cognitive units come to be entrenched and their activation automated to the extent they have been used before”. Thus, to promote indigenous language, we could ‘ride on the waves’ of popular trends. Within the schema theory paradigm, it would thus be a case of relating less entrenched cognitive units, by infusing them with already well-established units (as Fig. 3.1 shows). These entrenchments however, are as Schmid (2007) refers to them “tacit rather than explicit”.

Therefore, the schema expansion that this work posits as a means of language revitalisation is *forcefully* tacit, since it is tied with an already popular and well accepted cognitive field: internet social media.

The notion of entrenchment is closely related to the notions of salience; which bifurcates into cognitive salience and ontological salience. Cognitive salience is concerned with the activation of concepts in actual speech events, and ontological salience refers to the quality of entities to attract attention over others.

Schmid (2007:119) states that

Irrespective of how a cognitive unit has been activated, it is said to be salient if it has been loaded, as it were, into current working memory and has become part of a person’s centre of attraction... since the use of concepts that are already activated requires minimal cognitive effort, a high degree of cognitive salience correlates with the ease of activation and little at no processing cost.

For ontological salience Schmid (2007:120) states that some properties of the real world “by value of their very nature, are

better qualified to attract our attention than others and are thus more salient”. Ontological salience refers to entities that have a relatively high potential of attracting attention, due to their characteristics.

The notion of ontological salience gives a more lucid thrust to the issue of PPE of culture; (and covertly language). Emoticons therefore are by their very nature very visible when combined with text, and are ‘qualified to attract attention’.

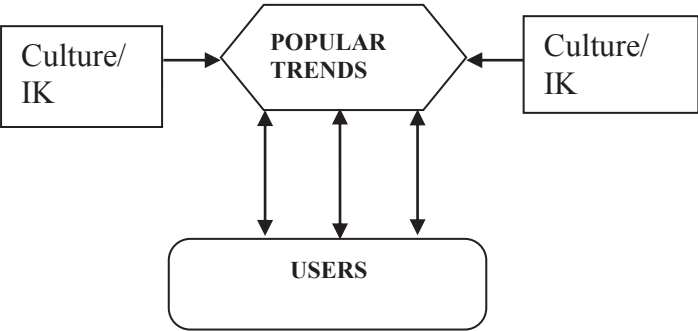


Figure 3.1 *Culture/Indigenous Knowledge Integration Matrix*

Figure 3.1 allows a graphical view of what has been said. The integration of indigenous culture elements into the domains that are well subscribed to will mean that those individuals are exposed tacitly to the cultural elements. A consistent ‘flooding’ of the popular domains with these cultural elements completes the forcefully tacit tactic.

Figure 3.1 also helps explain the concept of conceptual blending, which is crucial to the submissions of this work. Conceptual blending (Turner and Fauconnier, 2002) is an operation that constructs a partial match between two inputs to project selectively from the those inputs into a novel

'blended' mental space, which then dynamically develops emergent structure⁹.

The process of conceptual blending requires (1) Mental spaces or domains, and (2) establishment of mappings between them. The mental spaces are thus: The indigenous culture mental space and the Internet social media mental spaces; indigenous culture emoticons suffices as the tool for mapping relations between both mental spaces. This is because this work aims to blend two different schema modules: the indigenous culture schema module, and the internet user schema module. This is made possible because the targeted set of people who this work proposes to be reached congregate on the internet.

The blending of the indigenous culture with the popular media is therefore a necessity for these indigenous cultures, if their prestige value is to be promoted. Thus, the emoticons proposed, and the paradigm of emoticons suggested, blend what has been with what now is. It blends two conceptual realities: The Indigenous Culture and the Internet culture or movement.

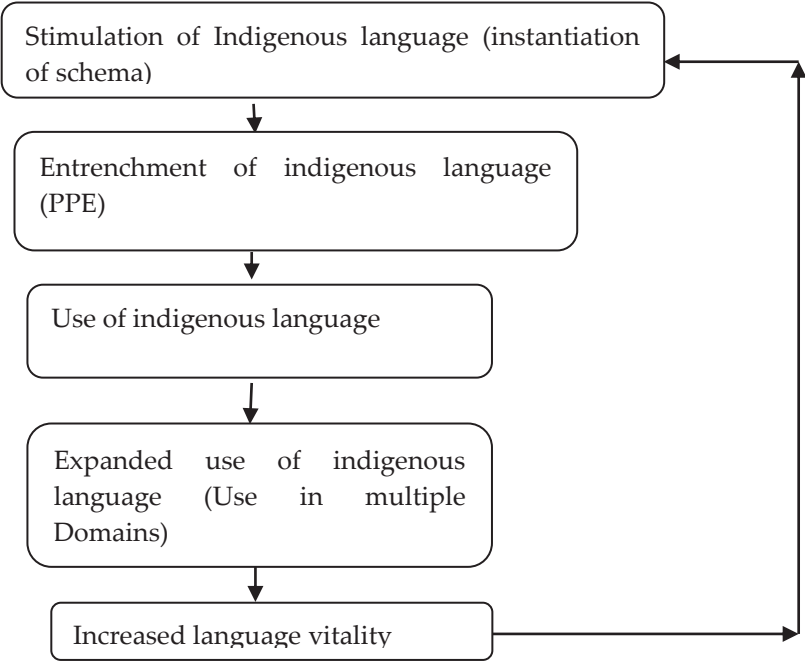
This work posits that cultural renaissance leads to language revitalisation. It means therefore, that the individual will by identifying with a particular culture, in some manner also identify with the language.

The view by Shweder (2003)¹⁰ is that in an on-going cycle of mutual constitution, people are socioculturally shaped shapers of their environments. Thus, a continuous entrenchment or priming of indigenous culture via the emoticons will in turn see the individuals seeking avenues for

⁹www.cogsci.ucsd.edu/blending.pdf

¹⁰ Cited from Markus and Kitayama 2010:421

indigenous language use, and these indigenous languages will find expression in more domains (see Fig 3.2).The issue of language vitality is essentially an issue of domains, and this is the focus of this work, to increase the domains language users have in contact with the language. Thus, we could create a parallel and simultaneous connection between the language vitality networks. The confluence is that this work targets an individual cum societal revitalisation, and by stimulating contact it has a bifocal aim: an individual stimulation, increasing the individual’s association with culture and thereon with further entrenchment, the individual soon becomes the propagator of the language.



3.2 The Schema theory and language revitalisation

3. Vitality of Nigerian Languages in the ICT

Language vitality is demonstrated by the extent that the language is used as a means of communication in various social contexts for specific purposes. The most significant indicator of a language's vitality is its daily use at home. A language with high vitality is one that is used extensively both inside and outside the home, by all generations, and for most if not all topics¹¹. The indices that the UNESCO language vitality assessment report (2003) (Henceforth the UNESCO Report) provides would be used to ground issues of vitality.

The UNESCO Report provides six major evaluative indices of language vitality:

- 1) Intergenerational language transmission,
- 2) Absolute number of speakers,
- 3) Proportion of speakers within the total population,
- 4) Trends in existing language domains,
- 5) Response to new domains and media,
- 6) Materials for language education and literacy

The UNESCO Report however provides a proviso that none of these factors should be used alone, as a language that is ranked highly according to one criterion may deserve immediate and urgent attention due to other factors.

Language vitality is essentially an issue of gradations in various domains, the contextualized sphere of communication (Clyne, 1998:209). This work is directly concerned with following domains:

¹¹www.sil.org/language-assesment/languagevitality

1. Intergenerational language transmission (factor 1)
2. Trends in existing language domains (factor 4),
3. Response to new domains and media (factor 5)

Factor 1: *Intergenerational language transmission*

Degree of Endangerment	Grade	Speaker population
Safe	5	The language is used by all ages from children up
Unsafe	4	The language is used by some children in all domains, it is used by all children in limited domains
Definitely endangered	3	The language is used mostly by parental generation and up.
Severely endangered	2	The language is used mostly by the grand parental generation and up
Critically endangered	1	The language is used mostly by very few speakers
Extinct	0	There exists no speaker

Table 3.1 *UNESCO Report Factor 1: Intergenerational language transmission*

With regard to factor 1: There exists evidence in the literature that indigenous language use among the younger generation is at a low ebb, perhaps as a result of ‘poor’ transmission, presenting a situation where language loyalty is low among its younger users, because of the elitist nature of imperialist English (Igboanusi and Peter, 2005; Fakoya, 2011; Ugorji, 2005; Azuonye, 2002; Oyetade, 2015.). The UNESCO Report (2003:2) states that “a language is in danger when its speakers cease to

use it, use it in an increasingly reduced number of communicative domains, and cease to pass it on from one generation to the next”.

This work therefore provides a platform which presents the culture and the language as *cool* and *hip*; by presenting them in media that is consistent with popular culture and appetites, which will help situate the culture as philosophical base by which they make their choices, and determine their appetites.

Factor 4: Trends in existing language domains

Universal use	5	The language is used in all domains and for all functions
Multilingual	4	Two or more languages may be used in most social domains and for most functions
Dwindling	3	The language is used in home domains and for many functions, but the dominant language begins to penetrate even home domains
Limited or formal domains	2	The language is used in limited social domains for several functions
Highly limited domains	1	The language is used only in very restricted domains
Extinct	0	The language is not used in any domain, and for any function

Table 3.2 *UNESCO Report Factor 4: Trends in existing language domains*

In addition, the UNESCO Report states that speakers do not have to be monolingual for their languages to be vital. However, the language in question should have a meaningful

function in culturally important domains.

Igboanusi and Peter (2005:11) submit to the issues in factor 4 thus: 'In Nigeria, the dominance of English is overwhelming in practically all domains: government and administration, education, the mass media, the parliament, the judiciary (excluding Sharia courts and customary courts), science and technology and literary creativity'.

Factor 5: Response to new domains and media

Degree of Endangerment	Grade	New domains and media accepted by the endangered Language
Dynamic	5	The language is used in all new domains
Robust/active	4	The language is used in most new domains
Receptive	3	The language is used in many new domains
Coping	2	The language is used in some new domains
Minimal	1	The language is used only in a few new domains
Inactive	0	The language is not used in any new domain

Table 3.3 *UNESCO Report Factor 5: Response to new domains and media*

The issue for factor 5 is rather a complicated one, as it suffers from an overlap of the issues that factor 4 four already highlights. Which is that already existing domains are not robustly filled with indigenous languages, therefore very little

should be expected from new domains. If we grapple with the issues of existing domains, shall we then take advantage of the new domains?

One of these ‘new’ domains is the domain of the ICT. This is the domain that this work seeks to promote indigenous language use in, using indigenous culture emoticons as context and catalyst. This work leverages on the position of Egbokhare (2014:35):

In order to develop and energize the culture industry, we need to harness ICT capacities. We propose to create a virtual platform to collect basic cultural information in structured formats and template that is accessible to mass participation using readily available digital tools for the production of culture.

Thus, this work follows in that perspective to provide and energise the culture ‘context’ industry, thus providing the required individual contact for schema expansion and entrenchment to increase vitality.

Fabumi and Salawu (2005) raise concerns that Yoruba language may follow the path of Dutch in Von Horde (1998:6)¹²:

Dutch may not be threatened with extinction in the short or medium term, but is in danger of losing domains. It could eventually become just a colloquial language, a language you can best express your emotions in, but not

¹² Cf. Fabumi and Salawu (2005).

the one you use for the serious things of life: work, money, science technology.

However, that may already be a reality as Fakoya (2011:15) remarks that in many Yoruba families the English language is used extensively. Ugorji (2005:163) with regard to Igbo, states that even in the home, the English language is gradually displacing Igbo.

This work therefore seeks to empower indigenous languages to claim domains. It proposes that these efforts kick off by effectively ‘claiming’ the domain of Phatic communion; the seemingly mundane, basic and daily rituals, and provide a springboard for the reclaiming of other domains (as Figure 3.2 shows). This is because the domains that had been thought to be the exclusive preserve of these indigenous languages are being threatened and overtaken. Fakoya (2011) on code-mixing in Yoruba shows that the language suffers because even in such contexts, there are more English words than Yoruba words. Azuonye’s (2002) similar work on Igbo, the resulting mix being referred to as *Englibo*, shows similar results in favour of English. Therefore, “It would be sheer unfounded presumptuousness for anyone to think that the Yoruba language as well as other languages in the word is not threatened by the English language” (Fakoya, 2011:21).

The possibility of empowering indigenous languages using social media which is an internet resource is feasible. In this regard, Crystal (2004:3) states that “The internet aids language revitalization, by enabling speakers separated by space to maintain a virtual contact through email, chat and instant messaging environments”. However, the platform for such robust usage must be laid, this work seeks to do so.

The positions this work puts forward therefore provides solutions to the problems posed by the factors 1, 4, 5; indigenous languages must be made to embrace new domains, and in a fashion congruent with youthful trends.

4.1 Indigenous Languages in the Face of ICT, the Internet and Globalization

There is a current technological revolution going on in the information technology. The challenges that globalization poses for Nigeria cuts across all areas of her national life... Nigeria's cultural heritage must be preserved, shared and passed on... Nigerian languages have to be part of this revolution. A major challenge therefore is to empower Nigerian languages, and position them to partake in the information revolution (Udoh, 2007:193)

The ICT/Internet revolution is one that has been remarkable in its ramifications; thus, the scramble to have a grip on this domain should not elude Nigerian indigenous languages.

ICT includes any instrument that is used for electronic data management, transmission, manipulation and storage, [and] the internet is the global communications network that allows computers worldwide to connect and exchange information¹³¹⁴. Emenanjo (2005:1) refers to the internet as the "hub, dynamo and catalyst of the ICT". Globalization on the other hand is a process of influence or control over various

¹³www.dictionarereference.com/browse/internet

¹⁴ Can be confused with intranet, which is a computer network with restricted access as within a company

systems, disciplines, relationships and transactions of various nations and independent states.

Globalization is not a new phenomenon; however, the instrumentality of the ICT affords it unprecedented potential. This is because ICT is a global concept, effectively efficient at reducing boundaries, and making the entire global systems now effectively manageable. The globalization process would eventually result in what Jibril (2005:31) refers to as the process as one that seeks a “unipolar world”. This uni-polarity could lead to, among others, a fairly unitary linguistic system. Steger (2003)¹⁵ presents *inter alia* some features of globalization.

1. Creation and multiplication of social network activities that go beyond the traditional, political, economic, cultural and geographical boundaries.
2. Reflection in the expansion and stretching of social relations, activities and interdependencies
3. Intensification and acceleration of social activities and exchanges

The features outlined by Steger (2003) emphasise the large-scale social system that comes with globalization. Due to the linguistically diverse nature of the world, it is necessary that individuals find a way to communicate across linguistic boundaries¹⁶. However, it would be grossly inappropriate for

¹⁵ Cf. Udoh (2007:194)

¹⁶ “To most Nigerians, however, English is an important resource for self – enhancement, social and political empowerment and access to educational and job opportunities. Therefore (standard English enjoys overt Prestige among them. Furthermore, the use of English enables Nigerians to join the mainstream of the world economy, technology etc.”. Igboanusi and Peter (2005:18)

one of those languages or cultures to dominate the others; and even if such a situation is found to exist, speakers of the dominating language (and culture) should be absolved of blame as the speakers of the other languages have a responsibility to self-develop.

Indigenous Nigerian languages have not fared well in this ICT revolution. Udoh (2007:194) noting the dominance of English language states that the software are designed for a few languages, with a major focus on the English language. Fabumi and Salawu (2005:250) also state that with regard to IT “there are no spaces for other languages besides English”. To this regard, Egbokhare (2014:12) remarks that the “obsolescence of local languages [in the ICT] has left the average Nigerian with no other choice than to engage English language in place of indigenous ones”. While this may be the case in reality, Fakoya (2011:20-21) admonishes that the task of Language (and culture) development is one the speakers must be actively involved in. Therefore, it is no longer enough to decry that indigenous Nigerian languages are endangered by some other language; the situation now demands the active involvement native speakers of Nigerian languages.

This work submits that despite the need for languages-of-wider communication¹⁷, indigenous languages should be developed alongside them, and made to function in culturally important¹⁸ domains. Fabumi and Salawu (2005:258) state that

¹⁷ The possibility of having Computer translations from one language to another that will capture the various non-direct/figurative nuances of language is still vague.

¹⁸ The idea of culturally important domains can be virtual or physical. Virtual Family and clan meetings are now a reality, as a host of social media apps allow for group chats, of about a hundred people. With the current trends, having a larger number is feasible, if not already available.

“in the course of Information revolution, language is the most fundamental space of flow..., any language that is not available to Information Technology is endangered”. Therefore, there is to need to as has earlier been said, reinvigorate the various cultures and their languages for use in culturally important domains.

5. Social Internet Use in Nigeria

Having stated in the objectives that this work seeks to promote indigenous language use through internet social systems, this section shows the state of Nigerian digital/internet presence

Statistical data¹⁹ from the Terragon group^{20/21} show that Nigeria has a current population of 174,507,539 persons with an annual growth rate of 2.54% up from 2.33% in 2012. The data also showed that 32.9% (65,813,890) of that number are mobile internet users (also called *Netizens*). 78% of that number access the internet daily, while 67% of that number spends one to three hours on the internet daily.

The data shows that 31% of online activities are geared towards search, 26% for social media, 18% for downloads and 17% for email.

The data show that the top social media sites on Nigeria are thus:

¹⁹ Appendix I

²⁰ www.twinpinenetwork.com Retrieved May 20, 2015.

²¹ Being based on data from 2013, and considering that in the data there is an annual increase in internet subscription, it is very plausible that the ‘numbers’ have increased.

LinkedIn	1.6 million users
Facebook	12.6 million users
Nairaland	1.2 million users
2go	10.2 million users
Yookos	6 million users

Another internet statistical resource²² shows that 45% of the Nigerian mobile population use Whatsapp and active BBM (BlackBerry Messenger) users average 4 million²³ monthly.

As regards general internet activities, the major points of access are thus: social media, search for information, internet shopping, content downloads, instant messaging and emails. Of these access points, the number of users that connect from a mobile phone range from 60%-92% while access from a desktop accounts from about 5%-35%.

Of the 32.9% (of the general population who are mobile internet users), 40% are very active on social media. The activities on social media has updates and tweets taking up a 40% frequency rate, likes 52%, post an image 32%, Share or retweet or repost 39%, comment 55%, and chat having a 78% frequency rate.

The data from the Terragon group makes clear the fact that many Nigerians are spending time online, and that many of them are active on social media and spend time chatting than doing anything else. Also remarkable is the ease with which they can chat, being that mobile phones are easy to carry

²² Techweez: Technology News and Reviews.

<http://www.techweez.com/2014/03/05/49-of-kenyans-mobile-users-on-whatsapp/>
Retrieved January, 22, 2016

²³<http://innovation-village.com/bbms-monthly-active-users-in-nigeria-hit-4-million>. Retrieved January 22, 2016

about, and as a result one can receive and send messages at any time or post pictures and make Updates/Tweets²⁴.

As has been said in previous sections, and as can be seen, the social media domain represents a popular trend and is accepted as *hip* and *cool* especially among younger people. Therefore, integrating indigenous culture elements into the social media will create a contact point to serve as an activator or instantiation and an entrenchment or expansion point of a schema about the culture, leading on to the language.

The cultural emoticons being proposed should become prominent features of social media interactions, in turn would increase cultural awareness and translate to increased language awareness.

Egbokhare's (2014:8) remark is apt:

Through ICTs we can return the capacity to produce culture, sustain and modernize culture to the significant population who drive change and development. However, we must discover our cultural assets and opportunities, utilize available tools to transform them and tie them up with youth culture and the economy and education.

6. Indigenous Nigerian languages and chat

Indigenous Nigerian languages are currently being used for chat on the social media, although rather sparsely. For individuals who chat in these indigenous languages, emoticons will serve as a means of further entrenchment, for those who do not find indigenous languages fashionable, the

²⁴ Various social media sites give different names to 'expressions'. On Facebook it is referred to as Updates, on Twitter, it is referred to as tweeting.

emoticons will serve as a catalyst for indigenous language contact.

A number of social media sites provide indigenous language pages, or allow the users create such pages. The idea that a language can be revitalised by encouraging chat in indigenous languages, is not a new idea, and has been exploited, as seen in efforts to revitalise the Occitan language. The data available shows that both Yoruba and Igbo have less than 0.1% content respectively on the internet^{25/26}, this is certainly not a favourable situation, for a country that has the 8th largest Internet population (Data from Terragon group²⁷). Enquires are being made with regard to the use quota of indigenous Nigerian languages; however, while the research is on-going it can be tentatively predicted relying on previous works on the attitude of users towards these indigenous languages. Igboanusi and Peter (2005:23-24) highlight the point that “it [English] is the preferred future lingua franca for speakers of all the languages [in Nigeria] except Hausa” , thus there is a nexus between this and the position of Egbokhare (2014) that highlights the interpretation of identities by the younger generation using the English Language.

As Figure 2.1 shows, presenting these indigenous languages as having the ability to express modern realities, concepts and paradigms would promote subscription to their use; and emoticons would serve as a means to achieve this purpose.

²⁵www.w3techs.com/technologies/breakdown/cl-yo-/ranking. Retrieved July 20, 2015.

²⁶www.w3techs.com/technologies/details/cl-ig-/all/all. Retrieved July 20, 2015.

²⁷ Appendix 1

7. Emoticons

An emoticon sometimes called a smiley is created by a sequence of printable characters, such as :) or (^_^), ('_'), (*.*) (*_') (! _!) that are intended to represent human facial expressions, and convey emotions are found in internet fora and instant messaging.²⁸ They are also called “smileys” (Crystal 2004:36).

Amaghlobeli, N. (2012:348) giving a reason for the existence of emoticons states:

With the flourishing of information technology in the last 50 years electronic communication has become a significant part of our daily lives. As electronic languages is written in text. It is divorced from gestures, facial expressions and prosodic features such as intonation, rhythm, and volume. These features naturally led to the difficulty of comfortable and smooth communication.... that is why emoticons (or smileys) have entered cyberspace to provide the electronic communication with an emotional touch....on emoticon (word from emoticon and icon) is a facial expression represented by a combination of punctuation marks, letters or characters. Today some are more expressive, often animated so represent images in GIF format.

Also Crystal (2004:36) states:

Netspeak²⁹ lacks the facial expressions, gestures and conventions of body posture and distance which are so

²⁸www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?Term=emoticon

²⁹ According to Crystal 2004, *Netspeak* is the kind of language found on the internet.

critical in expressing personal opinions and attitudes and moderating social relationships. The limitation was noted in the early development of netspeak, and led to the introduction of smileys or emoticons.

Interaction and communication in our real world is interspersed by para-linguistic cues which situate a particular speech act. Thus, a sentence well situated within a context, might be completely rejected in another context. The nature of 'chat' on the internet actually seems a lot like written-spoken language³⁰. That is, although there is the use of graphic elements associated with writing, it however is more similar in its nature to speech. Crystal (2004:29) on the nature of chat states; "Chatgroups and virtual worlds, though expressed through the medium of writing, display several of the core properties of speech. They are time-governed, expecting or demanding an immediate response...and their utterances display much of the urgency and energetic force which is characteristic of face-to-face conversation".

7.1 Origin of Emoticons

Emoticons have developed to serve functions other than they did originally; to include discourse marking and deictic roles. "As for emoticons known today, it is assumed that the first ones were introduced in 1982 by Scott Fahlman of Carnegie Mellon University on a computer science BBS from where it spread to usenet and later to the internet." Ptaszynski M., Rzepka R., Draki K. and Momouch Y. (2011:1159).

³⁰ These refer to written expressions which have essentially the manner of the Spoken form.

In recent times, emoticons have grown from just being a set of punctuation marks used to show some emotions to a set of images and other 'pictorial forms' that underlie a host of cultural nuances, and have been used as a means to advance some culture or philosophy.

Crystal (2004) considers emoticons as elements that aid in disambiguation and also that have some pragmatic force "acting as a warning to the recipient(s) that the sender is worried about the effect a sentence might have".

Amaghlobeli (2012:348) provides a review of recent works on the emoticon;

The field of emoticon study has a long tradition and was observed from different perspectives with a focus on specific objectives; some research in psychology has focused on the emotional dimension of emoticons and their roles in message interpretation (Walther and D'Addams 2011). Emoticons are also considered as politeness indicators (Bunz and Campbell 2004). The feasibility of emoticons as answer for questions aiming at emotional states and feelings has also been investigated (Meschtegakov, Weiss and Schendi 2009). In particular, Riva analysed emoticons with relation to socio-cognitive process of emotional expressions.

This work however contributes to this burgeoning study by considering emoticons as tools for language revitalisation, and as culture contact elements, considering them as one of the avenues to promote participation in culture, by using them as a means to make culture (these underlying cultures) interesting to youth, profitable, 'hip', and relevant, aiding

intergenerational culture transmission.

7.2 Classification of Emoticons

Due to the evolution of the Emoticons they would be classified structurally and functionally.

Structural Classification

Structural emoticons have to do with their design. Here, the distinctive feature is the size.

- 1. Emoticon Smileys – These are a class of emoticons that usually represent an emotion, they are also the smallest kind of emoticons. ☺☹

	Angel		Nerd		Smoke
	Ass		No		Spin smile
	Big grin		No pompom		Stupid
	Bye		No smile		Thumb down
	Clown		Omigosh		Thumb up
	Confused		Pompom		Thumps up
	Cool		Puh		Tongue
	Cry		Puke		Whatever
	Eerie		Sad		Whehehe
	Emo		Shiny		Wink
	Frown		Shut up		Worship
	Hearth		Shy		Yawnee
	Kiss		Sigar		Yes
	Kwiji		Smile		Yummie

Figure 7.1 Emoticon Smileys³¹

³¹www.adiumxtras.com. Retrieved June 19, 2015

2. Emoticon stickers – They are a size bigger than the Emoticon smileys.

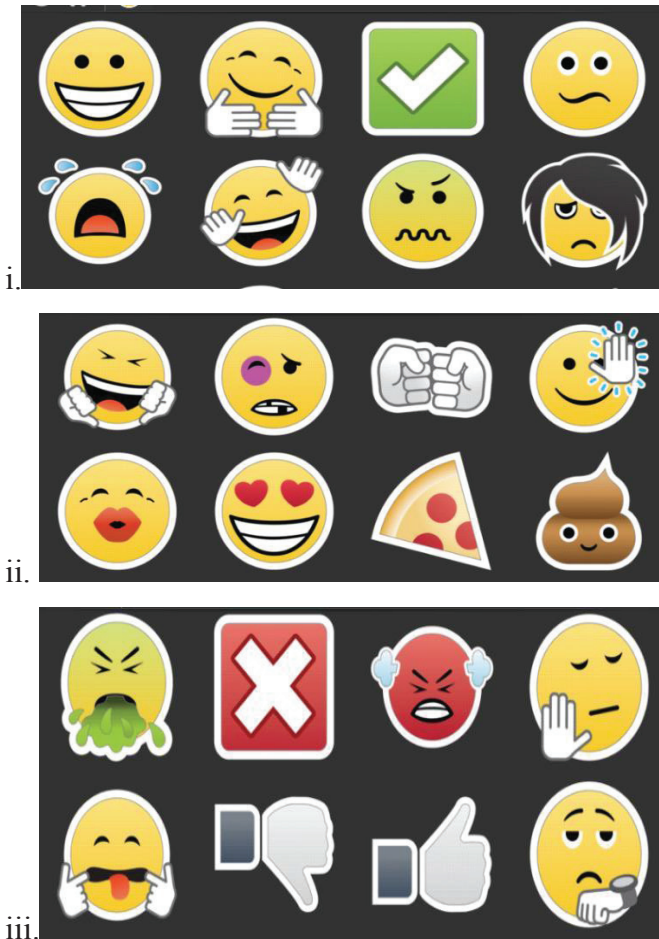


Figure 7.2. *Emoticon Stickers*³²

3. Emoticon emotext – These are either smileys or pictures that also have text alongside the image.

³² Blackberry Messenger App. Retrieved June 19, 2015.



Figure 7.3 Emoticon emotext



Figure 7.4 Emoticon emotext

In recent times, emoticons have taken a more cultural (philosophical) outlook as the next classification shows.

Functional Classification

In this category, we refer to them as *Culturecons* (**Culture-Icons**). The various elements that a culturecon can signify include food, religion, leisure, seasons, festivals, etc. These Culturecons could be seen in any structural design, even having hybrid designs. The extracts below show various smileys and an explanation of their undergirding cultures.



Figure 7.5³³ *Chinese* themed emoticon emotex

The stickers above undergird a popular Chinese tradition, the Chinese New Year.

³³ Blackberry Messenger App. Retrieved June 19, 2015.

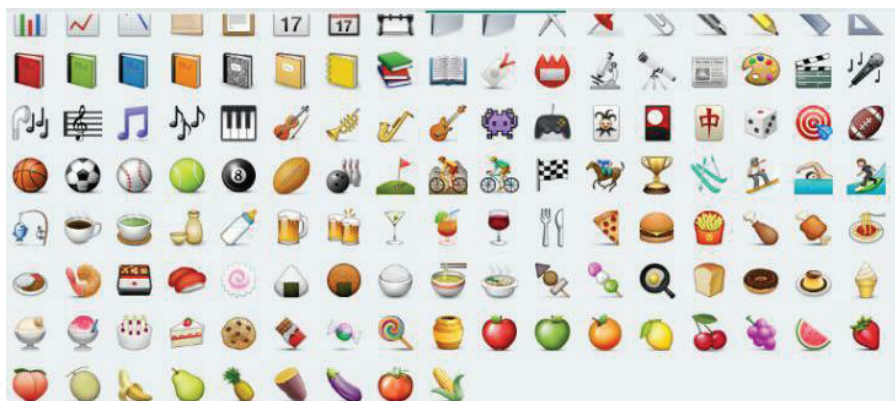


Figure 7.6³⁴ *Euro-America-Asian smileys*

These emoticons smileys are essentially material externalizations of Euro-America-Asian *cultures* of music, sports, and food.

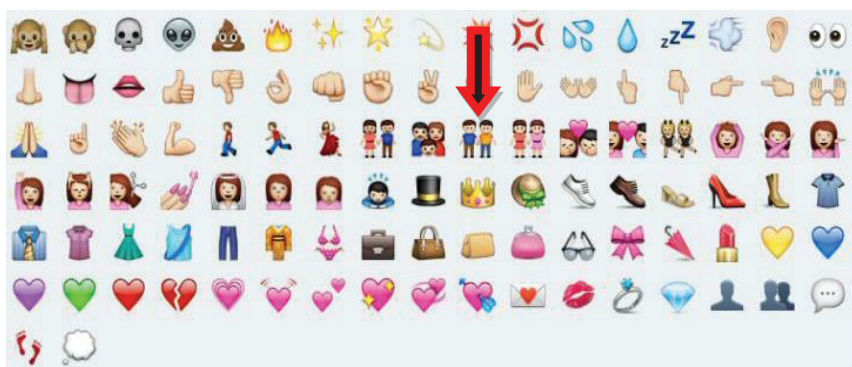


Figure 7.7³⁵ *Emoticon smiley signifying western concept of family*

³⁴ Whatsapp App. Retrieved June 19, 2015

³⁵ Whatsapp App. Retrieved June 19, 2015

The emoticon smileys signified by the arrow in Figure 7.7 above signifies *inter alia* the western concept of family. The western concept of family is the nuclear family, in the languages of focus, Igbo and Yoruba it is the extended family. If the emoticons were to capture the realities in most of the indigenous cultures on Nigeria, there would be, in addition to the nuclear family emoticon, an emoticon signifying the concept of the extended family.

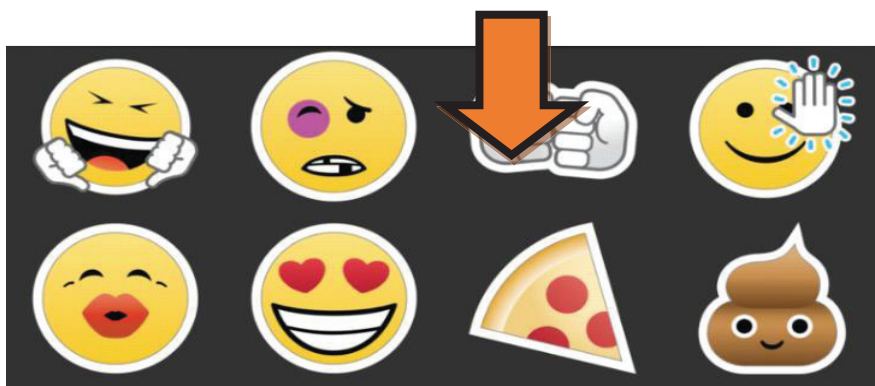


Figure 7.8³⁶ *Emoticon sticker signifying Italian cuisine*

The emoticon stickers above (highlighted) signifies an Italian cuisine *Pizza*. This agrees with the opinion in Egbokhare (2104) that all the systems that exist are undergirded by some cultural presuppositions.

³⁶ Blackberry Messenger App. Retrieved June 19, 2015.

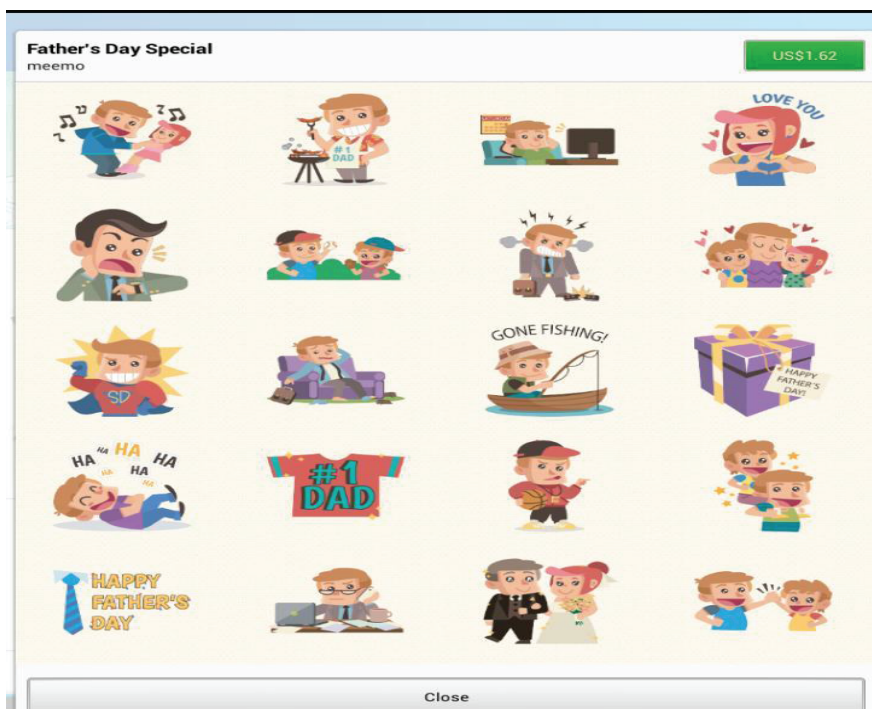


Figure 7.9³⁷ *Father's Day emotext*

The emotext in Figure 7.9 undergirds a religio-social tradition; Father's Day festival. However, as has been seen, there is an already existing paradigm for the production of indigenous culture emoticon smileys, stickers and emotext³⁸. It therefore provides a platform for the creation of other culturally significant emotext for events: for weddings, traditional events like the new yam festival, the Eyo masquerade festival, the Osun festival, etc., and during such events, with the

³⁷ Blackberry Messenger App. Retrieved June 19, 2015.

³⁸The question that needs to be asked is "on what cultural presuppositions have these emoticons been designed?"

context available, it would engender a positive attitude towards these cultures (and the languages they undergird) Some already indigenous culture emoticons emotext available are thus (and in addition to Figure 7.3 and 7.4).



Figure 8.10³⁹ Nigerian culture themed emotext

8. Indigenous Emoticons

This section proposes emoticons⁴⁰ with underlying Nigerian indigenous culture. These emoticons will serve to do the following:

³⁹ Blackberry Messenger App. Retrieved June 19, 2015.

⁴⁰ All Emoticons in this section are original.

1. To promote indigenous culture internet content
2. To serve as context for chat in indigenous Nigerian languages.

Our proposition is that the context would trigger the content desired. The presence of indigenous culture emoticons and emotext (culturecons) (as seen in Figures 8.3 and 8.4) is laudable, but the already available ones are engineered to serve an entertainment and aesthetic value. The paradigm of the smileys, stickers and emotext (the emotext is for what we propose the most potent of these classifications, because it allows for the presence of text with an image.) we propose will serve not only an entertainment and aesthetic value, but will also convey some cultural competence, by representing the appropriate text with the appropriate non-verbal accompaniment (such as kneeling or prostrating for greeting).

8.1 Presentation of data

Data Set 1. Culturecon Smileys/Stickers

The culturecons in this section represent in some measure some material externalisation of culture, in this case, caps and tribal marks. The aim is that these material externalisations create shared context between two people communicating on social media chat or IM applications.

The use of these smileys or stickers as has earlier been mentioned is only constrained by the individual's creativity while 'chatting', or posting an update or tweet. On all the social media applications where emoticons are used, there is a definite number (although updates are common); however, that definite number can be used in an infinite number of combinatory sequences. It would, therefore, be difficult if not

impossible to suggest the many ways they can be used. Sections 8.2.1 and 8.2.2 are only as they have been so titled ‘simulated sentences’.

While the emoticons in this section do not allow for the co-occurrence of image and text, they however, will also allow for priming or instantiation and entrenchment or docking of the schema associated with the indigenous cultures (Langacker, 1987; Tuggy, 2007.)

The culturecons in this section would be analysed structurally, and their cultural underpinnings duly highlighted, the implications of their use will be seen in sections 8.2.1 and 8.2.2.



Figure 8.1 *Indigenous Nigerian culturecon sticker/smiley*

Analysis: This Culturecon Sticker/ Smiley shows a face with a cap culturally worn the Igbos of south-east Nigeria.

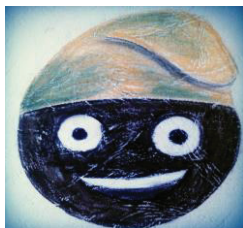


Figure 8.2 *Indigenous Nigerian culturecon sticker/smiley*

Analysis: the Culturecon Sticker/Smiley shows an excited face with a *Filà* cap culturally worn by the Yoruba, the position of the flap being also culturally significant in the Yoruba socio-culture.



Figure 8.3 *Indigenous Nigerian culturecon sticker/smiley*

Analysis: The Culturecon Sticker/Smiley shows a face with a smirk, and 'lit-up' eyes, putting on a cap culturally worn by the Igbos of south-east Nigeria.



Figure 8.4 *Indigenous Nigerian culturecon sticker/smiley*

Analysis: The Culturecon Sticker/Smiley shows a winking face with an *Abeti aja* cap, known to be worn by the Yorubas of south-west Nigeria.

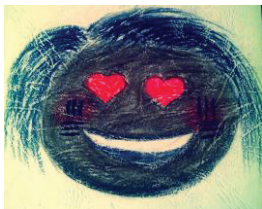


Figure 8.5 *Indigenous Nigerian culturecon sticker/smiley*

Analysis: The Culturecon sticker /Smiley shows a (female) face with tribal marks, and cornrows. (The 'heart shaped' eyes are used in emoticons to represent being "in love").



Figure 8.6 *Indigenous Nigerian culture themed sticker/smiley*

Analysis: the Culturecon Sticker/Smiley above shows a winking face with a cap known to be worn by the Hausas of northern Nigeria.



Figure 8.7 *Indigenous Nigerian culturecon sticker/smiley*

Analysis: The Culturecon smiley shows a very happy face with tribal marks and putting on a *Fila cap* worn by the Yorubas of south-west Nigeria.



Figure 8.8 *Indigenous Nigerian culturecon sticker/smiley*

Analysis: The Culturecon Sticker/Smiley above shows a very alert face with a cap known to be worn by the Hausas of northern Nigeria.



Figure 8.9 *Indigenous Nigerian culturecon sticker/smiley*

Analysis: The Culturecon Sticker/Smiley above has a red cap with a feather on; Worn by the Igbos of south-east Nigeria.



Figure 8.10 *Indigenous Nigerian culturecon sticker/smiley*

Analysis: The Culturecon smiley/sticker above has a *Fila* cap known to be worn by the Yorubas of south-west Nigeria.

Data set 2. Culturecon Emotext

The Culturecon emotext has very potent prospects, as it allows for the co-occurrence of text and image. This work considers the importance of the emotext because it instantiates and leads to the entrenchment (docking) of not just the text, or the non-verbal accompaniment at the same time.

The culturecon emotext will serve as part of the solution to the problems of a lack of indigenous culture competence among young people. The use of the culturecon emotext, while seemingly more defined than the culturecon sticker/smiley, is also limited only to the creativity of the individual, as individuals even also find other uses for formulaic expressions other than their sacrosanct uses.

However, it is stated that Figures 8.11, 8.12, 8.13 and 8.14 would after proper design have the aesthetic form of Figures 4.3 and 4.4.



Figure 8.11 *Indigenous Nigerian culturecon emotext*

Figure 8.11 shows two sets of culturecon emotext; the first set shows a young lad greeting an elderly person in Igbo, with the accepted non-verbal accompaniment. The second set, however, shows persons of equal age standing, with one appraising the others efforts at a carrying out a chore where no peculiar non-verbal accompaniment is required.

What this can do is that the individual comes in contact with an Igbo text, in a context, and also what is expected of the user of such a text. Providing these sorts of elements to the social network user, in an attractive way would obviously increase the prestige value of not just the culture, but also the language.



Figure 8.12 *Indigenous Nigerian culturecon emotext*

Figure 8.12 has two sets of culturecon emotext. Also signifying Igbo text and appropriate context of use. The first emotext set shows a younger female greeting an older male, with the proper verbal and accompanying non-verbal cues. The second emotext set shows a younger male, greeting an older male.



Figure 8.13 *Indigenous Nigerian culturecon emotext*

Figure 8.13 has two sets of culturecon emotext. The first set typifies the manner in which a younger male in the Yoruba socio-culture greets an older person. Thus, bringing to the fore, the appropriate verbal and non-verbal cues expected of one who is culturally competent. The second set shows the manner in which a younger female in the Yoruba socio-culture greets an older person.



Figure 8.14 *Indigenous Nigerian culturecon emotext*

Figure 8.14 has two sets of culturecon emotext. The first set shows a younger female greeting an elderly person, the emotext shows the appropriate verbal and non-verbal composite expected for the cultural act of greeting. The second set, however, shows an older person appraising the efforts of a younger person. The emotext shows that the elder is not expected to prostrate or bow before a younger person ordinarily. It can then be seen that the aspects of culture are accounted for in these culturecon emotexts (hence, the cultural value or conscience). Firstly, the social distribution is clearly

visible, as the greetings show the distribution of roles among various age groups. The modes of thought, though not covertly shown, is attested to nonetheless, because social distribution is essentially premised on modes of thought, and then social distribution is manifested in some material externalisation.

It must be stated however, that the culturecon emotexts this work proposes is not limited to greetings alone. These only served for elucidation purposes. Other culturally significant emotexts are expected to be designed on this paradigm, of appropriate verbal and non-verbal composite. Culturally significant events like festivals, ceremonies and the like are ready candidates for design.

8.2 Sample (Chat/IM simulated) Sentences

These sentences provide a sample of chat/IM simulated sentences and the emotion stickers/smiley's we suggest. Sixteen (16) sentences are presented. Nine (9) of the sentences are in the Yoruba and Seven sentences are in the *Igbò* language. Due to design issues, the use of the emotext cannot be shown with simulated context.

8.2.1 Yoruba (Chat/IM simulated) Sentences

1. Eḡáàárò 

‘Good morning’



2. Ahh ifẹ̀ mi, ẹ̀sẹ̀ ọ̀ níbọ̀?

‘ah, My love, are you still coming?’



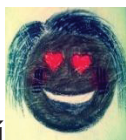
3. Ẹ̀sẹ̀ ọ̀gìdì emu ní?

‘Is the palm wine original?’



4. Ẹ̀sẹ̀ àláfíà ní?

‘Hope you are fine’.



5. Ayuǹ rẹ̀ yun mí

‘I long to be with you’.



6. O wù mí

‘I desire you’

7. Má pèé o



‘Be back on time’

8. Bójú bá yejú



‘keep your promise’

9. Ọ dààrò àlàyé mí



‘Good night my pal’

8.2.2. Igbo (Chat/IM Simulated) Sentences

10. Ûtụtùtù ọma



‘Good morning’

11. Bikwè wèta nkwià kà ife na-ème ème



‘Bring the palm wine let’s get started’.

12. Chin^ěkè! Nkwobi à bù ùwà n^ĩl^ē!



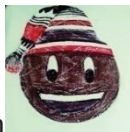
‘Goodness! This *Nkwobi*⁴¹ is delicious’.

13. D^ĩk^ē!



‘Great guy!’

14. Onye ñkèm



‘My trusted person’

15. Ób^ĩm, k^ēdú?



‘My darling, How are you?’

16. K^àch^ĩ f^óó.



‘Good night’

⁴¹ Nkwobi is local delicacy of meat in some peppery sauce.

It thus presents an interesting flavour to indigenous language use on Chat/IM.

9. Towards Cultural Competence

This work considers the viability of indigenous Nigerian emoticons based on the premise that Crystal (2004) gives, on the close resemblance of 'speech' and 'chat'; of Chat being written-talk. Speech in these indigenous Nigerian languages, have some sort of culture-determined '*non-linguistic*' accompaniments. There is therefore a need for some 'cultural commitment to add substantial flavour to chat, matter-of-fact, it does seem that chat almost demands these accompaniments. Fakoya (2011:17) states thus "Among the peoples of Africa, proverbs, aphorisms, and other flavouring resources play a pivotal role in imparting meaning". It is thus posited that these emoticons will provide such flavour for chat, which will turn promote and invigorate the use of indigenous languages in chat.

It has been stated that this work seeks to immediately claim the domain of phatic communion on social media platforms (chat and Instant Messaging). The domain of phatic communion in these languages, does not just serve a 'pretentious' purpose, rather, it is culturally significant. One of the pivotal ones Fakoya (2011:17) highlights is the culturally-grounded greeting form for every activity and situation in the Yoruba language, however simple or complex. However, even this culturally intrinsic domain is gradually being eroded. Fakoya (2011:17) also bemoans the absence of some sort of cultural competence in this domain of the Yoruba culture, stating that:

The modern Yoruba clan is bereft of the dictates of ethnographic conduct, as members move from one situation to another, leaving most of them with almost zero consciousness about the greeting forms expected, for instance, to accompany an occasion like visiting the bereaved as opposed to expressing empathy with somebody who has merely lost money.

Incorporating these greetings as emotext, will re-energise that system and see to its expanded and perhaps even expatriate use. This could be replicated in other languages. Thus, we would have been able to succinctly tie up culture with popular means, yet retaining the flavour.

The kind of emotexts that this work proposes include the required text and the accompanying paralinguistic cue, thus it can reinvigorate that cultural system of (appropriate) greetings; if the culture is reinvigorated, the language will likewise be.

10. Conclusion

This work sought to provide an avenue to strengthen the foothold that indigenous Nigerian languages have on internet social media. Most of what is done on *Chat* are mundane conversations, aimed at maintaining social relations and the like, which is also referred to as Phatic communion. This work seeks that indigenous languages be made a mainstay of this sub domain of the internet, since it is a vital, well subscribed-to domain, as data presented has shown.

Emoticons, are a mainstay of chat, it helps to *inter-alia*, provide a 'human-ness' to *Chat*. Thus, they are well utilized. However, the exploitation of current trends in the emoticon

provides an avenue to activate and entrench the prestige value of indigenous Culture and Languages, providing context for the use of indigenous languages.

This work is not as proactive as it may seem, at this point, it is reactionary, and sadly so. However, it is a step in a right direction nonetheless. The internet is a reality that has come to stay, and continually, its potentials continue to boggle. It is important that we lay hold of it, in any manner that we can. This work does not pretend to be self-sufficient; these emoticons can serve complementarily to indigenous language pedagogy endeavours, providing colourfully themed contexts for language learners to practice the use of what has been learnt in formal environments.

This work follows a meso-language planning tradition of some sort, where the efforts to preserve and/or promote a language are not necessarily government centred; it sought to ‘Private Sector-rize’ the efforts of language revitalization. However, added government effort and endorsement would see the submissions in this work record good success.

11. Recommendations

It is recommended that other new and existing domains be so developed alongside, as a multifaceted approach for language revitalization.

Movies, songs, cartoons, etc., should be further encouraged in indigenous languages, with themes ranging from modern technological advancements to futuristic technological aspirations, blended in with our core cultural values, as a way to relate past, present and future.

It is also recommended that linguists and cultural aficionados be involved in these ventures, to provide a

technical perspective, beyond just the entertainment value, on what aspects of culture, may be re-enacted in these emoticons, which will serve as super-ordinates for some other IK systems. That the government should outsource the task of promoting the prestige value of indigenous languages to private organisations, and maintain a supervisory role, or adapt a Public Private Partnership (PPP) approach towards this regard.

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Appendix I

Images Showing the State of Nigerian Internet/Digital Presence
Images were retrieved May 20, 2015, from www.twinpinenetwork.com

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1. Source:
CIA World Factbook Est. July, 2013

CURRENT POPULATION OF NIGERIA
174,507,539

terragon group
- 

2. Source:
CIA World Factbook Est. July, 2013

NIGERIA'S ANNUAL GROWTH RATE IS 2.54%...
...UP FROM 2.33% IN 2012

terragon group



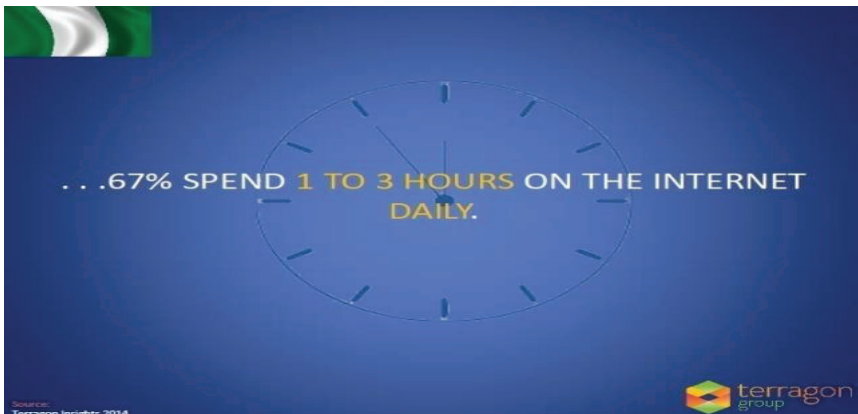
3.



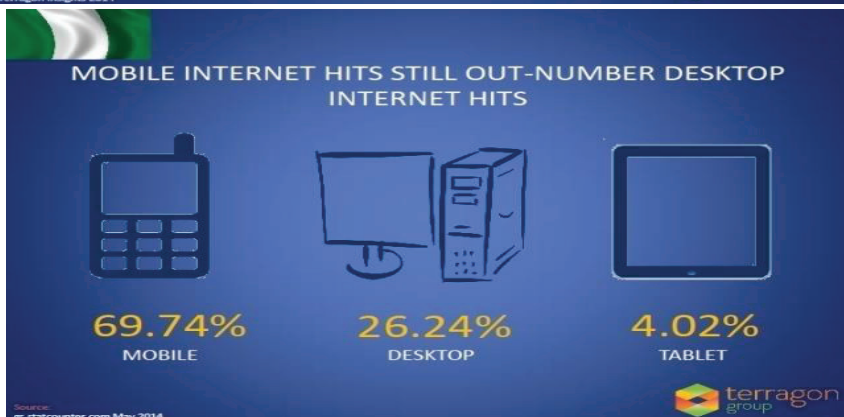
4.



5.



6.



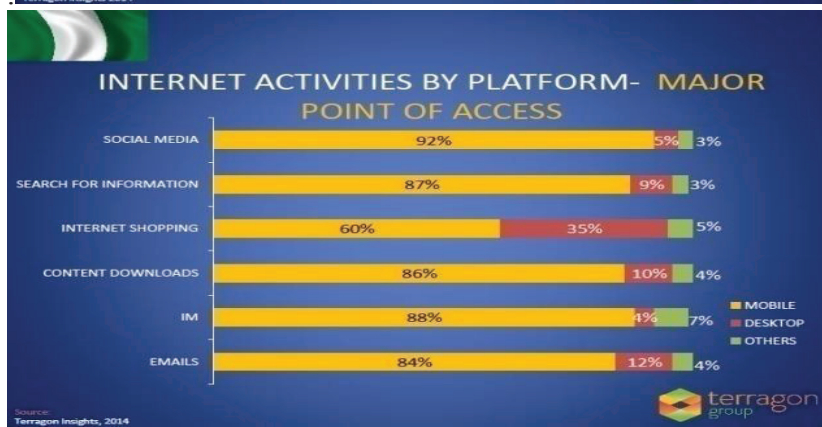
7.



8.



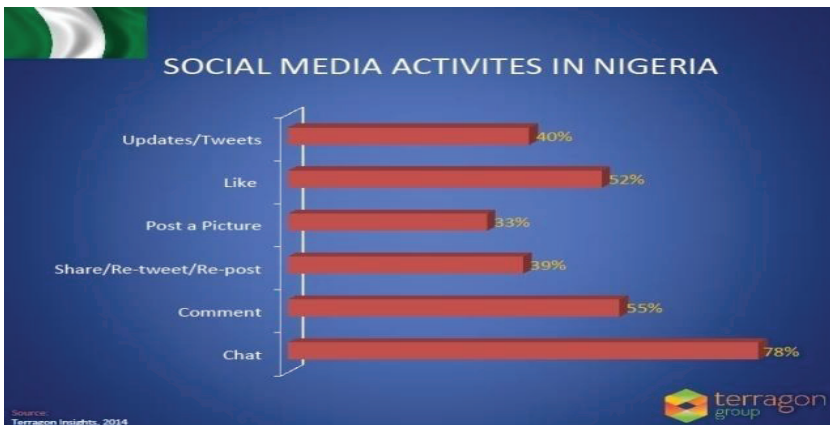
9.



10.



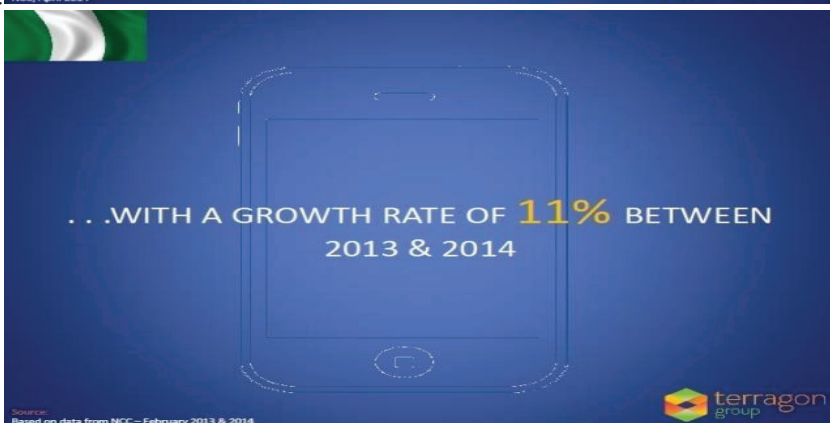
11.



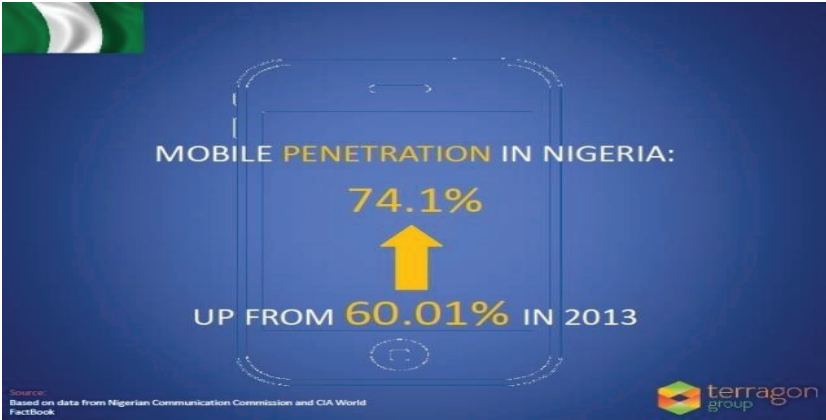
12.



13.



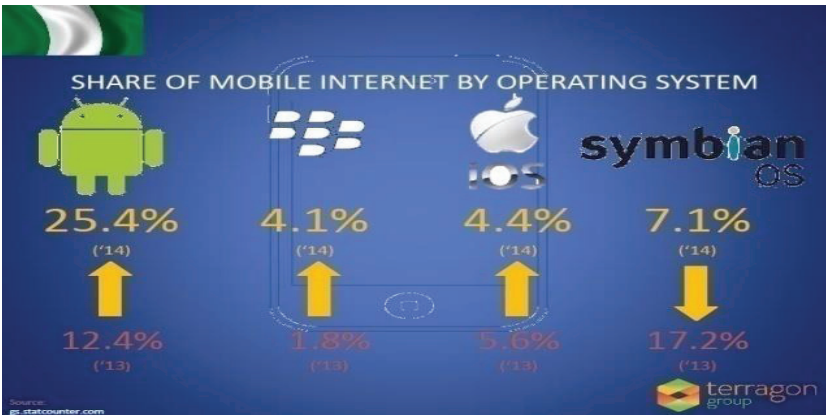
14.



15.



16.



17.

18.



19.



15. The Globalisation of English in the Nigerian Multilingual Experience

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Nigeria is a multilingual nation with hundreds of languages spoken within the country. Out of all these hundreds of languages, there is no one dominant indigenous language. Three indigenous languages, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are regarded as the major languages. English is the only neutral language in Nigeria, serving almost all purposes; official, trade and commerce, education, international communication and lingual Franca. Against this background, the paper observes the role of the English language as a global language and how it functions in a multilingual Nigeria. The study concludes that since English language is about the most amazing resource language in the world today, there is the need to adopt it as our common language for mutual understanding and international cooperation.

1. Introduction

Before going to the issue of English as a global language, it is pertinent to first discuss globalisation as a concept in itself. According to Adetugbo (2000), globalisation may mean the transformation of the relationship among states and institutions, the universalization of certain practices, the global restructuring of the recent decade since the dissolution

of the Soviet Union or indeed the structure of the liberal capitalist relations. It has few facts attached to it which are:

- a. A sense of making global or universal of certain issues such as sustainable development, human rights, abolition of child labour and the universal fight against HIV/AIDS.
- b. The remaking of the world whether in terms of deregulation, or privatisation, a world information and communication order or world democratisation, etc, and the creation or dissolution of concepts like inequality, self-determination, etc.

Adetugbo (2000:1) further asserts that while one might be justified in claiming that the term 'globalisation' started with the establishment of The League of Nations and subsequently the United Nations Organization, the word was late in coming to the English Language. Today, it is largely used as a celebratory term for the subtle conquest of the rest of the world by the liberal capitalism of the West. It is sugar-coated and very few are complaining. Even China, with her undying adherence to communism is not complaining because she is globalising Hong Kong.

Globalisation has three main components which are:

- a. Culture and etc. civilization - US and European movies, global TV stations like Cable News Network (CNN), MTV, or human rights, abolition of capital punishments, etc.
- b. Global economy- the world trade organization, open market, international division of labour, World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the London club, the Paris

club, etc.

- c. The expression of what is regarded as global political and military order - globalisation of democracy, UN'S establishment of interventionist forces as monitors, Iraqi war, etc. (Adetugbo 2000:02).

Graddol (1997) notes that “world economies and cultures are becoming increasingly interconnected and interdependent, politically, socially and technologically”. Global trade is no longer a bilateral arrangement between nation States, or between organisations economically rooted in nation States. Such is the complex structure of business ownership through joint ventures and holding companies, that establishing any simple national pattern of ownership of the major enterprises is difficult. And many of the world's largest corporations can hardly ever be called multi-national, rather they have become transnational. It has been calculated that transnational corporations (TNC'S) account for as much as two-thirds of international trade in goods of which, of 50 of the 100 largest economies are said to be nation states but (TNCS) (Adetugbo 2000:02).

2. The Concept of the Global Language

The pertinent question that now arises is ‘how does a language come to achieve a global status? It is reported in the National Teachers Institute book *English Language* that a language is described as a world language if among other things it is:

- a. used by a sizeable world population;
- b. used by different people in different parts of the earth's

surface, i.e. it is used internationally or by more than one country;

- c. it is associated with human efforts in global development e.g. science and technology, and
- d. it is used in international organizations and agencies like the UNO (NTI:2000:196).

All the parameters above are enumerated as factors needed to be considered for a language to be regarded as a global language. All these factors cut across the world and enhance the concept of globalization. In actual sense, if we consider a global language as a language spoken and understood all over the world, it would take a long time for a global language to emerge, if it ever will. And yet, we still need a global language. Nnaji (2004) buttressed this point by pointing out that language can be a barrier to communication and this fact is true whether the activity is tourism, research, government, policing, business or data dissemination. The lack of a common language can be a serious setback.

Crystal (1997) while addressing the topic affirms that a language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognised in every country. He further clarifies that this notion of 'special role' has many facts. Such a role will be more evident in countries where large members of the people speak the language as a mother tongue-in the case of English, this would mean the USA, Canada, Ireland, Britain, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and several Caribbean countries. He argues that however, no language has ever been spoken by a mother-tongue majority in more than a few countries (Spanish leads, in this respect, in some twenty countries, chiefly in Latin America). So, mother-tongue

use by itself cannot give a language global status, a language has to be taken up by other countries around the world. The people concerned must decide to give it a special place within their communities, even though they may have few (or no) mother-tongue speakers. This can be done in two main ways. First, a language can be made the official language of a country, to be used as a medium of communication in such domains as government, the law courts, the media, and the educational system. Second, a language can be made a priority in a country's foreign language teaching, even though this language has no official status. It becomes the language which children are most likely to be taught when they arrive in school, and the one most available to adults who, for whatever reason, never learned it, or learned it badly, in their early educational years.

Crystal (1997) further contends that a language does not become a global language because of its intrinsic structural properties, or because of the size of its vocabulary, or because it has been a vehicle of a great literature in the past or because it was once associated with a great culture or religion. These are indeed all factors which can motivate someone to learn a language, of course, but none of them alone, or in combination, can ensure a language's world spread. Indeed, such factors cannot even guarantee survival as a living language, as is clear from the case of Latin, learnt today as a classical language by only a scholarly and religious few. Correspondingly, inconvenient structural properties (such as awkward spelling) do not stop a language achieving international status either (Crystal 1997:7).

3. English and the concept of the global language

English now qualifies to be regarded as the global language. Crystal (1997) reports that English enjoys some kind of special status in over seventy countries. Other languages with considerable official use include French, German, Spanish, Russian and Arabic. But the role of an official language is today best illustrated by English; English enjoys special status in about seventy countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, India, Singapore, Vamatu, etc.

This is far more than the status achieved by any other language, though French, German, Spanish, Russian, and Arabic are among those which have also developed a considerable official use. Each year brings new political decisions on the matter, for example, Rwanda gave English official status in 1996 (Crystal 1997:3).

Moreover, Nnaji (2004) notes that English is widely taught in over one hundred countries as a foreign language. Among the factors that dictate the choice of a favoured foreign language are: historical tradition, political expediency, and the desire for a commercial cultural language.

It needs sustained political will for it to really grow. According to Crystal (1997), about a quarter of the entire world population is already fluent or competent in English and the figure is on a steady increase. An estimated figure of between 1.2 and 1.5 billion people are conversant with English while Chinese, found in 8 different spoken languages but unified by a common writing system has about 1.1 billion speakers at about the late 1990's, (Nnaji 2004: 24).

English is now the world's MOST IMPORTANT language and it is estimated to be spoken by one in five of the world's population. It is the language of international commerce,

popular culture and the internet and holds an unassailable position among the world's major languages not in terms of the number of speakers but in terms of domains of use and international spread.

English is spoken not only as a first language in the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Australia and New Zealand, Canada, but also by over one million people in Trinidad and Tobago, over 3 million in the Irish Republic, over 2 million in Jamaica, over 3 million in South Africa, some quarter of a million people in the Bahamas, in Barbados, in India, in Malaysia, in Sierra Leone, in Singapore, in Suriname and in Zimbabwe respectively. It is also estimated that 1.6 billion people at the beginning of this millennium will be learning to speak English either as a second language or as a foreign language, a number larger than the total number of speakers of Chinese (Crystal 1997; Adetugbo 2000:04).

We have been speaking so far about the success of English as a global language, but the fact still remains that some factors are responsible for this growth and spread of English. It is enumerated in the National Teacher's Institute book *English language* that some of the factors responsible for the growth of English include:

- a. *Economic motivation* - The early voyages of discovery undertaken by British sailors and adventurers were with the primary aim of promoting trade. Through such journey, new markets were discovered for British products and raw materials were obtained for the home market especially for fuelling the wheels of the industrial revolution. In the process, English became popular as a language of trade.

- b. *Political motivation* - The British policy of colonisation, i.e. bringing territories under the direct control of the British monarch helped in the spread and imposition of English as an official language on people of different cultures. Today's members of the Commonwealth of Nations once belonged to that category. The same political reason may be advanced for the growth of English in the USA before and after independence. Although not declared official as such, English is however, promoted and used as the language of public life in the USA.
- c. *The Slave Trade* - This is, in a sense, an economic reason. The introduction of the obnoxious trafficking in human beings-known as the slave trade-brought a number of people of African origin to the Americas. Most of them who now speak English (the language of their slave masters) can be found in the USA and the Caribbean Islands like Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana etc.
- d. *Science and Technology* - The advent of radio and television has almost made English the most influential language of the world's global village. The BBC and VOA are particularly influential in this respect as they help in disseminating information and propaganda to a restive world. English has also become one of the few languages used for the documentation of scientific research and technological production-thanks to the USA (NTI 2000:12).

It is reported by Crystal (1997:53-54) that the US linguist Brav Brachman has suggested that we think of the spread of English

around the world as three concentric circles, representing different ways in which the language has been acquired and is currently used:

- a. The *inner circle* refers to the traditional bases of English, where it is the primary language: it includes the USA, UK, Ireland, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.
- b. The *outer or expanded circle* involves the earlier phases of the spread of English in non-native settings, where the language has become part of a country's chief institutions, and plays an important 'second language' role in a multilingual setting: it includes Singapore, India, Malawi, *Nigeria* and over fifty other territories.
- c. The *expanding circle* involves those nations which recognise the importance of English as an international language, though they do not have a history of colonization by members of the inner circles, nor have they given English any special administrative status. It includes China, Japan, Greece, Poland and (as the name of this circle suggests) a steadily increasing number of other states. In these arrears, English is taught as a foreign language. (Crystal 1997:53-54).

In the global use of English language, the roles of the language are evident in the following areas:

- a. International conferences and organizations;
- b. Scientific publications;
- c. Advertising of global brands;

- d. International banking, economic affairs and trade;
 - e. Cultural products: films, TV, Popular music, CNN and MTV;
 - f. International tourism
 - g. International safety (air speak, sea speak);
 - h. International law;
 - i. Interpretation and translation;
 - j. Tertiary education;
 - k. Technology transfer;
 - l. And internet communication.
- (Adetugbo 2000:05)

From the above, we can see that the status of English as a world language makes it to perform global or world-wide functions. In addition to these, some more functions are enumerated in the National Teacher's Institute book *English language* which are:

- a. *The use of English as a language of international communication, cooperation and understanding*: English is used in bilateral discussions and agreement, international summits and conferences, as well as by international bodies like the UNO, UNESCO, WHO, UNICEF, OAU, ECOWAS, etc.
- b. *The use of English in science and technology*: The language has now become the dominant language of science and technology in the modern world, having overtaken competing languages like French, German and Russian.

- c. *The use of English as the language of commerce:* Business transactions between people of different nations take place in English. In fact, English remains the language of two of the most powerful stock exchanges: The London stock Exchange and the American Dow Jones.
- d. *The language of literary production:* English is now an influential language in the production and documentation of literary material as writers from different countries and cultures depend on English as their mode of expression.
- e. The language of information gathering, processing and expression: In this respect, the BBC and VOA have been of the tremendous assistance to English as it becomes one of few world languages used in informing and misinforming people around the globe.

4. The Nigerian Multilingual Situation

The history of Nigeria shows from earliest times that Nigeria, through a natural phenomenon thus, the Niger Benue “Y” shaped rivers, is divided into three major areas. These are the North, the West and the East. This earliest division corresponds with the three major language groups in Nigeria, the Hausa in the North, the Yoruba in the West and the Igbo in the East. Beyond these major language groups it is estimated that more than four hundred indigenous languages are spoken in Nigeria (NTI 2000).

With this complex language situation, Nigeria then faces a complex ethnic grouping scenario with very perplexing linguistic problems. The implication of this is the absence of a common, easy and effective communication between the

numerous groups. This means limited interaction among the various linguistic groups which in turn leads to a cultural and political antagonism.

The absence of a dominant language makes English language a natural language and despite the fact that English language came into Nigeria through colonial domination, no resistance was seen at the introduction of English in the country.

English in Nigeria is given official status in order to avoid the problem of having to choose between the competing local languages such as the Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo languages. It is seen as a neutral language that cuts across ethnic barriers. It is the truth that now, Nigerian English is the only neutral language. It serves almost all purposes: official, trade and commerce, education, international communication and inter-ethnic interaction.

Alongside the nation's development, the English language has continued its development to a point that right now in Nigeria, English is Nigeria's second language, the language of commerce and law, of politics and administration, of education and of culture at all levels above the local. An adequate knowledge of English is an indispensable requirement for anyone to rise above or live in any wider context or community than the village. Unlike any of the indigenous languages, the English language because of its neutrality does not engender any ethnic hostility; rather it ensures peaceful co-existence in Nigeria's linguistic diversity.

English is about the best option as a solution to Nigeria's national language question, especially as the English language in Nigeria has a Nigerian texture. With it, commerce will not be paralysed, education will not be impaired and retarded,

law will not be perverted and culture will not be drained of its life blood. It is the Nigerian texture in the English language in Nigeria that provides the “in-group” variety for internal communication and gives the individuals the sense of oneness, unity and loyalty. The in-group element reflects a common national background, a common national culture and a common attitude to life. The in-group cultural element is contained not only in English spoken in Nigeria, but in English spoken in all countries where the language is used. It is this element that makes the British feel British, the French feel French, the Ghanaian feel Ghanaian and the Nigerian feel Nigerian. No other single language can give this type of national feeling, pride and sense of belonging to the multiplural ethnic people of diverse languages in Nigeria (N.T.I: 2000).

To buttress this in-group element, the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe (1964) in *Morning Yet on Creation Day* affirms that Africans have learnt English well enough to be able to use it effectively in creative writing. He points out that it is neither necessary nor desirable for an African to be able to use English like a native speaker. The African writer should aim to use English in a way that brings out its message best without altering the language to the extent that its value as a medium of international exchange will be lost. He gives this position:

The price a world language must be prepared to pay is submission to many different kinds of use. The African writer should aim to use English in a way that brings out his message best without altering the language to the extent that its value as a medium of international exchange will be lost. He should aim at fashioning out

English which is at once universal and be able to carry his peculiar experience. I feel that English will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be new English, still in full communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings.

5. Conclusion

From the discussion above, we have been able to discern English as an international or global language. It is the language of the world stock markets such as Dow Jones and London Stock Market. It is also the language of world bodies such as UNESCO, UN, WHO, World court in the Hague, ECOWAS, etc.

In addition to this; we have also seen that in Nigeria, the English language has been so much with us that we now seem to take its roles and functions for granted in our everyday life. The language is so much central to all our formal facets of life such as judiciary, parliamentary parastatals, education, journalism, etc., that the attention paid to it is far more than the one paid the Nigerian languages. Since, the entire world is becoming a global village, and English language is the language used for international connections; English language will continue to play the role of its present status in Nigeria: It is advocated in this paper that the study of language be adequately enhanced. More specialist teachers of English should be trained so as to ensure effective teaching of the language at all our educational system. Experts should be encouraged to generate more textbooks on the language.

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16. Making French Language Study Relevant in Nigeria in the 21st Century Globalised Information Technology World

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The paper examines globalisation within the context of French language study in Nigeria. The paper starts by taking a look at the definition of the word “globalization” and some of the conceptual issues involved. Thereafter, it focuses on the possible benefits that could be accrued from globalisation. It also proffers some solutions to the seemingly stumbling blocks that may hinder these benefits. Some of these solutions include good governance, a sound banking system, independent judiciary, development of human, capital, physical infrastructure and strong institutions among others.

Introduction

Globalisation which is not a new phenomenon, has been vigorously defined since the turn of last century. For example, Daovas (2001:2), sees it as multi-dimensional, affecting all aspects of life – economic, cultural, environmental, and social – as well as relations between government and nations on five continents. Okonkwo (1998:1) defined it to mean increasing linkages among countries or the deeper integration of the world economy by trade, finance, direct investment and technology. Globalisation is characterized, in particular, by an intensification of cross-border trade and increased financial and foreign direct investment flows, promoted by rapid

liberalization and advances in information technologies. According to Ajayi (2001:6), it implies the increasing interaction among, and integration of the activities – especially economic activities of human societies around the world to the extent that it will produce the best outcome for both economic growth and human welfare.

On the other hand, information technology is the technology that facilitates the generation, processing, storage and dissemination of information (Emmanuel, 1998:2). Technology itself is the body of knowledge and practices, which leads to the development of new systems and devices that support human activities (Oladipapo and Chiemeké, 2000:172). Information on the other hand, is the facts told or knowledge gained or given. The bottom line of information technology is to enhance information flow through various outlets.

The fulcrum around which Globalisation and Information Technology revolve is the computer. It is an invention, which is the marvel of the 20th and 21st centuries. It is the greatest facilitator of the accumulation and global sharing of knowledge and information yet to be known (Okeh, 2003:5).

Conceptual Issues in Globalisation and Information Technology

The definition of globalisation contains both a description and a prescription. The description pertains to the expansion of international flows of trade, finance, and information into an integrated global market, and the prescription to the liberalization of national and global markets in the belief that free flows of trade, finance, and information will enhance growth, human development and well-being. Two reasons

have been advanced for the recent popularity of the concept of globalization. The first is the scale and speed with which it is occurring and the way technology (especially in communication and transportation) is changing the world. Second, it is now widely accepted that international environment is changing in profound ways and that the world is indeed becoming a global village.

It has been argued further (Aragba-Akpore, 1999:22) that:

Of all the technical changes that have influenced our lives in recent years, it is those in Information Technology, which have had the greatest impact. This will continue to be so, at least, until the end of the first half of the next century, when other major technological breakthroughs in the area of new materials, biotechnology or energy may force entirely new ways of living on mankind.

Information technology consists of several other technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Computing, Telecommunications, Broadcasting, Magnetic Recording, Printing and Photography and so on. It is a complex system, which consists of an input unit, a communication unit, a processing unit and an output unit. In everyday usage therefore, Information Technology is synonymous with computer and communication technologies.

The concept of information technology is inextricably bound up with that of systems, which consist of a set of elements related together in some meaningful way so as to achieve some designated purpose. All human institutions – churches, government departments, business firms,

educational institutions, and military establishments are systems. They can only function properly if they are co-ordinated through the transfer of information processed by information technology (Banjo, 1997:1879).

A question that readily comes to mind at this point is how can the French language study remain relevant in this scheme of things knowing Nigerian peculiarities that are bound up in vicious circle of poverty, which is not only widespread but deep as well? In other words, what does Nigeria need to do to reap the maximum benefits from globalization and information technology? How are these benefits to be consolidated and directed towards the effective teaching and learning of French language in Nigeria?

Benefits of Globalization to Nigeria

There are a number of reasons why Nigeria must integrate with the global economy. The overriding premise being that economic integration will improve economic performance. Added to this is that, it will offer new opportunities, such as expanded markets and the acquisition of new technologies and ideas. All these can yield not only increased productivity but also higher standard of living. For the French language study to be properly placed in the 21st century and beyond in Nigeria, it is important that the following steps be taken.

Advances in Telecommunications must be Encouraged

Nigeria should embrace advances in telecommunication. Although globalisation is predicated on the relative ease of communication, the falling cost of information technology must be emphasized. While the cost of telephone calls has dropped in many African countries (for example, South Africa

and Cote d'Ivoire), the cost remains prohibitive in Nigeria. While the number of telephone lines has increased in some African countries, the number is decreasing relatively in Nigeria. Ajayi (2001:7) reported that in 1996, there were only 2 lines for 100 Africans. Even more painful is the fact that the average expected wait for obtaining a telephone in Africa is 3½ years – the longest in the world! While the developed world applies computer technology in all facets of their daily life, the opposite is the case in developing world. While e-mail is free in Western world and Europe, the charge is still exorbitant in Nigeria. Again, it is even more painful that even where it is relatively possible to send an e-mail message, the computers at these centres are not configured to accept French language (even in tertiary educational towns like Auchi, Benin and Ekpoma). Telecommunication infrastructure, it must be noted, is a conduit to the Internet, which lies in the heart of information technology, required for all-round human development (language inclusive). Complete integration with global economy requires a functioning, readily accessible, and affordable telephone system. It is regrettable that Nigeria with her current epileptic telephone system will not be able to meet the 21st century globalised world. At the moment, she has one of the lowest teledensity and computer spread in the continent.

The nature of the services provided by the current serves in the field like MTN, mtel, Globacom and so on, are not helping matters because of persistent network failure and high charges. Nigeria must take the necessary steps to rectify her deficiencies in this area if French language study must take its place in this rapidly globalising world.

Human Migration through Integration must be Encouraged

One of the avenues of globalisation is the movement of people across national borders. Over the years, and with more vigour in recent times, many Nigerians have moved to United States, United Kingdom, Canada and France. The main push factors from home front include poor working environments, deteriorating infrastructure, and political instability. One of the advantages of emigration include workers' remittances, which assures their country of origin a steady inflow of foreign exchange, and development of contacts that can lead to the acquisition of better skills, experience, and exposure to the latest technologies. The Nigerians in diaspora can therefore make important contribution to the country's development in all spheres of life.

It is posited therefore, that when these human integration barriers are eliminated rapid and increased contact can be established between Nigerians and their French counterparts. And from that point, information technology can be acquired and transferred which will give impetus and enhance the study of French language in Nigeria.

The Relevance of International Trade

Globalisation, perhaps, starts with most countries through international trade. Trade remains the vehicle for Nigeria's participation in, and full integration into, the global economy. However, Nigerian's trade is concentrated in few narrow range of commodities, and, even within this narrow range, her share has been shrinking. The whole continent of Africa average share of total world export and import has been declining. Between 1960-69, it was 5.3% export and 5.0% import. During 1990-98, it dropped drastically to 2.3% and 2.2

percent for export and import (Ajayi, 2001; Calamitsis, 2001:10). Among the reasons responsible for the declines are the restrictiveness of African's trade regimes, slow growth of per capital income, high transportation costs, and the continents distance from major world markets. Nigeria should as a matter of necessity and urgency re-focus her trade policies, which is at the moment, more of protectionist than liberalization and competition. Should this be done, a door would have been wide opened that will encourage more bi-lateral relationships not just with other nations but with the French government and nationals as well. One of the benefits through this contact, it is hoped, is assistance to Nigeria to raise the level of French language study. This brings us to the next point, which is capital flow.

Capital Flow

Capital flow, which is in the form of money and hardware (like machines), is yet another reason for globalisation but has not benefited Nigeria that much. Her failure to attract the capital flow she needs is attributed to negative perception of the nation's economic and political activities, her poor infrastructure, and an inadequate legal framework, particularly for enforcing contracts. If these bottlenecks are removed, capital flow which, in most cases, has to do with transfer, will be done with the French language. As this is continuously done, the French language will become a household tool in Nigeria.

The Need for the Application of Information Technology in French Language Study in Nigeria

Information technology can be used in the educational sector.

Such application will include student and personal record administration, test administration like Graduate Measurement and Aptitude Test (GMAT) and computer-assisted learning like studying and acquiring degrees from the Intern Universities (Universities on Internet).

One of the principal cardinal focuses of French language in Nigeria is to achieve economic, commercial, political and cultural development. These can better be achieved when countries become integrated through economic participation, which is the root of globalisation. It stands to reason therefore, that if such relationship exists between Nigeria and France, and since the French language will be the medium of communication, at all levels of interaction, appreciation and assimilation of the language becomes easier since it can now be learnt with relative ease.

The French language impacted by globalisation and information technology will help to facilitate the acquisition and accumulation of knowledge and information about French culture. This is necessary to the Nigerian learners of French, many of who can acquire degrees without travelling to any French speaking country like France, Canada, Belgium, Cameroun, Togo, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Republic of Benin to experience the language in its natural setting.

A lot of opportunities abound in the Internet and some of these openings that are usually career and job openings are in French language. Anybody learned in French can access this information and avail himself/herself of the benefits.

Panacea for Making French Language Study Relevant through Globalisation and Information Technology

It is important to stress few things here. First, globalisation

and information technology will not solve all the French language problems as it is in Nigeria today. Integration with the global economy is necessary but not a sufficient condition for making French language relevant. What needed to be put in place include things like stability (political and economic), responsible government institutions and reliable accounting and legal systems. Nigeria should also anchor her growth prospects in the development of human capital, physical infrastructure, and strong institutions. Good governance that stresses accountability and transparency, a sound banking system, and a trustworthy and independent judiciary are all critical in this era of globalisation.

There must be a deliberate policy change on Nigerians that will encourage competition and capable of venturing into new areas.

It must also be noted that given the differences in education, infrastructure development and macro-economic stability in individual countries, the benefits of globalisation and information technology are not likely to be the same all over.

Therefore, to maximize the benefits of globalisation and information technology as it relates to French study, Nigeria must begin to liberalise trade by removing trade barriers, adopting appropriate and stable exchange rate policies. She should also diversify her exports. Nigeria should also adopt policies that will give incentives to investors. Such incentives could be easing restrictions on entry and profit remittances as well as strengthening their banking and financial system.

It is true that Nigerians external debt burden is a major obstacle to investment. Deliberate attempts to reduce or eliminate the debt should be made.

When these are done, it is expected that we are going to notice what (Okeh, 2003:11) called *a new dawn of revival in the diffusion of French language in Nigeria* through the use of audio-visual and technical equipment in our schools, supply of French books; periodical exchange of French speaking staff; sponsoring of Nigerian staff to higher degrees abroad and numerous others.

Conclusion

Globalisation which affects all aspects of life – economic, cultural, environmental, and social – as well as relations between government and nations is needed by Nigeria as a nation. This is because globalisation which is hinged on information technology, implies the increasing interaction and integration of activities which on the long run will bring about economic growth and human welfare. However, these cannot be hundred percent derived without putting in place institutions like government that is stable and responsible as well as a deliberate policy that will encourage competition and capable of venturing into new areas of endeavour.

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17. 'Don't Let it Die': Indigenous/Indigenised Language in Selected African Literary Works in English

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This paper is an attempt to identify, analyse and discuss the use of indigenous/indigenised language in selected African creative works in English. It is intended to demonstrate that the deployment of indigenous/indigenised language to transmit and reinforce message in African literary texts of English expression is a way of saving indigenous languages from endangerment and preserving the cultural values embedded in them. The analysis is carried out within a stylistic orientation that considers style as choice. To enhance the survival of the indigenous language, new African writers, especially in colonial languages are encouraged to incorporate indigenous/indigenised language in their creative efforts; in spite of the pervading, choking influence of modernity and globalisation. The use of indigenous/indigenised items would also enhance rather than inhibit the communicative and aesthetic appeal of African literary works.

Key words: Indigenous/indigenised language, African Literary works, Stylistics, endangerment, cultural values

1. Introduction

Literature, language and society are in a complex and dialectical relationship in which one needs the other not only to survive but to function. The use of indigenous languages in African literary texts urgently needs rejuvenation and sustenance in the face of modernity/globalisation. English language is fast becoming the first rather than the second language in many homes of the educated Nigerians. As Adebowale (2011) posits in her Inaugural Lecture, 'For Nigeria to be relevant in the globalised world its indigenous languages must not die'.

This paper examines the use of indigenous language and indigenised forms of English in some African literary texts with a view of showing that the trend must not stop, to prevent language endangerment. The examination is en route a stylistic based approach.

2. The Language Question in African Literature

A major problem in defining African literature is the language question. This issue has engaged the attention of African critics as early as 1963 when few works of art were written by Africans. A number of scholars have expressed disparate views as to whether European languages should serve as the medium of expression in African literature or not. Obi Wali (1963) argues that

The whole uncritical acceptance of English and French as the inevitable media of educated African writing is misleading and has no chance of advancing African literature and culture.

As Oyegoke (1988) also reasons, language is implied by the African in African literature; "Since elsewhere individual literature bears the stamp of identity imparted on them by specific languages... Writings in English, French, Portuguese from or of Africa that bear the label African literature are considered a misnomer". Nonetheless, Biakolo (1983) has described African literature as 'a meeting point of two traditions-the oral and modern literate one'. In this sense, African literature is described as a mulatto or child of two worlds. Okanrende (2001:393) has, however, shown that there is a third world to the dimension via the Islamic – Arabic colonization. African literature in foreign languages alone cannot adequately capture African literature. African languages must not be underestimated.

3. Theoretical Framework

This paper examines the use of indigenous language and indigenized forms of English in selected African literary works from a stylistic perspective based on choice theory. Stylistics has been variously defined as 'the common frontier between the study of language and the study of literature (Oladeji 1987), 'the bridge between language and literature (Leech 1969) and 'the application of linguistics to the study of literature (Berry 1975). What is common in most definitions of stylistics, especially literary stylistics is that it involves the linguistic analysis of literary texts. Language and literature are allies, not opponents. This provides a justification for stylistics as a theoretical underpinning of this paper.

According to Wales (1997:437),

The goal of most stylistic studies is not simply to describe the formal features of text for their own sake but in order

to show their FUNCTIONAL significance for the INTERPRETATION of the text; or in order to relate literary effects of linguistic 'causes' where there are felt to be relevant''.

Style, indeed, is largely a matter of choice. The choice concept, as Osundare (2003:14) explains it

... attempts to provide information about how the author came to intrude upon the communicate universe, and the means and modes selected for effecting the intrusion.

Language offers its users a variety of options from which to choose in the course of speaking or writing. The lexical and syntactic choices a writer makes reflect his/her attitude to the subject-matter and the audience. Achebe's choice of 'be my eyes there' rather than 'be my representative' is a matter of choice for communicative and aesthetic purposes. Style as choice is the most author-oriented of all the approaches to style-study.

The analysis of the African literary texts is broadly divided into two: (1) Indigenous items/expressions and (2) Indigenised forms of English in line with the focus of this paper. The second part is further divided into sub-sections for the purpose of elucidation.

4. Analysis

4.1 Indigenous Items/Expressions

A distinguishing feature of some African literary texts is the complete transfer of some indigenous items and expressions into the works. Some of these items have no English

equivalents. Any attempt to translate them will not help convey the proper sense of the words. Examples from Adiche's *Half of a Yellow Sun* are as follows:

Igbo word/expression	Meaning	Page
I nu go?	Have you heard?	6
Akpu	Starch from cassava plant	7
Umunna,	Relatives	8
Nsogbu nsogbu enyimba, enyi.	War or work song	12
A fa m bu Jomo	My name is Jomo	15
Arigbe	A local herb believed to soothe an angry man	15
Nwoke m	My friend!	21
Kedu?	How are u?	22
Ada anyi	Our daughter	39
I makwa	Do you know?	41
O di egwu!	Exclamation of surprise, scepticism or contempt	41
Ezi okwu?	Truly?	48
Nno, obi	Welcome, a small open house for visitors	71
Uziza, ori okpa, mmuo	Peppery herb for soup, masquerade, spirit	86
Deje	Well done!	89
Maka chukwu	To God (Swear word)	93
Chi	Personal god	94
Alu melu!	Abomination!	95
Nya nya oya mu ga-ana. Na m metu on u uwe ya aka...	All my sickness and tribulations will go, if I touched his clothe (a song from the biblical parable)	97
Jisie ike!	Well done!	114
I kwuna okwu	Don't say a word	132

Ekwuzina!	Say no more!	139
Ogene	A long metal traditional music instrument	187
Kwenu!, yaa! Kwezuenu!	A traditional greeting that precedes public address	190
Agu	Farm	192

Source: Omotayo (2013)

Examples of un-translated indigenous items and expressions also abound in Niyi Osundare's poetry. They include real names of living and non-living objects, e.g.

Of birds: elulu, agbé, àlùkò, àparò, àdòko
Of trees: Ògánwó, ayunre, ooro
Of vegetable: elegede, tete, ebolo, soko
Of traditional musical instruments: gangan, shekere, bata, agba
Of traditional dress: agbada, kente, babaringa
Of traditional songs: pere o pere yaju lorun agbamurere kiriji
Pepelupe agbamurere. *Moon songs* p. 1
Ose opo moti r'ogun lo foso Yee mo
Ti r'Oba lo foso. Igba m'odele n'oreni mi.
Oju mi nsomi rere. *Songs of the Season* p. 88

4.2 Indigenised forms of English

Another important linguistic feature of most African literary works is the use of indigenised English. Many African writers have exploited the flexibility of language, by stretching the English language to accommodate ideas in African contexts which are non-existent in the European world view. Achebe's

novels provide profound examples of indigenised English to capture African thought patterns and worldview. The best illustration can be found in *Arrow of God*. An oft-quoted passage in indigenized English is:

I want one of my sons to join these people and be my eyes there. If there is something there you will bring home my share. The world is like a mask, dancing. If you want to see it well, you do not stand in one place. My spirit tells me that those who do not befriend the white men today will be saying had we known tomorrow.

Arrow of God (1964:45)

The above statement by Chief Priest Ezeulu is addressed to one of his sons. He explains the reason for his wish to send him to the church. Though the text is made up of sentences that are well-formed in terms of English syntax, some phrases like 'be my eyes', 'one of my sons', 'my share' and 'masked spirit' may not be found in the environment of the native speakers of English. The context in this passage is Africa and it reflects African worldview and thought patterns especially those of the Igbos.

'One of my sons' originates from the African belief that sons are the pillars of a household and the hope of continuity in family name and lineage. Put simply, family name does not die where there are male children. They bear their surnames for life; unlike the girls who are married off to bear the family names of their husbands, 'One of my sons' rather than 'one of my children' captures the importance attached to 'sons' in African family context. This emotional attachment to sons is further underlined when Ezeulu questions one of his wives'

authority over his sons: "How does 'it concern you what I do with my sons'?"

Another indigenised English expression is 'be my eyes' which is an Igbo way of saying 'be my representative'. 'The indigenised form is preferred not only for its African sense of an envoy, but also for the expectation of the mission. The sender is expecting to be fed with some useful knowledge which is his 'share' of the mission. 'Mask' is an item that is part of the reality of African traditional society. It represents past ancestor (spirit) and shows there is a relationship between the living and the dead. The world is compared to a 'mask' during masquerade festivals which does not stand in one place. Any curious spectator has to move about to have a full view of it.

Thus, though the text is written in English, the language has been adapted to suit the African worldview, belief system and thought patterns. To show that the text was a product of a deliberate artistic effort at domestication of English, Achebe (1975:61) renders the text in another way using non-indigenised English.

I am sending you as my representative among these people. Just to be on the safe side in case the new religion develops, one has to move with the times or else one is left behind. I have a hunch that those who fail to come to terms with the Whiteman may well regret their lack of foresight.

Indigenization of English is one way in which African writers demonstrate that they are not totally removed from their roots in spite of the choking, pervading influence of western

civilization. African ideas provide the context for the literary text. Other African context based features reflect in the use of African proverbs, and idioms, folktales and fables as well as African symbols and images.

4.2.1 African Proverbs and Idioms

The effective use of proverbs in traditional African society is a distinguishing mark of an accomplished speaker or orator. Achebe metaphorically describes proverbs as the palm oil with words are eaten (*Things Fall Apart* p.5) to show their importance in conversation. Proverbs are popular, short, witty sayings noted for their forceful or figurative language and words of wisdom. They share the same characteristics with maxims, anecdotes and idioms. Use of proverbs is a common feature of African literature and is another way African writers indigenise the English language. The African proverbs are translated into English in such a way that the African flavour and mood are portrayed. Examples from Achebe's *Arrow of God* include

- (i) A toad does not run in the day unless something is after it (p. 21)
- (ii) When an adult is in the house, the she-goat is not left to suffer the pains of parturition on its tether (p. 18)
- (iii) Wisdom is like a goat-skin bag: every man carries his own (p. 16)
- (iv) When a handshake goes beyond the elbow, we know it has turned to another thing (p. 13)
- (v) Men of today have learnt to shoot without missing and so I have learnt to fly without perching (p. 15)
- (vi) The time a man wakes up is his morning (p. 111)

Most proverbs are couched in figurative language like metaphor, simile and personification. Proverb (iii) employs simile in order to compare wisdom to goat-skin bag, an African object that evokes the image of a constant companion on trips-special bag. The second part of the proverb which states that 'everyone carries his own' shows that 'wisdom' is natural to man. Proverb (v) makes use of personification of Eneke bird to evoke the image of vigilance. The use of figurative language in these proverbs helps bring out the import of the message in an aesthetically pleasing manner. The proverbs embody basic truths and socio-cultural realities. Another significant African writer whose works portray realities in African context is Niyi Osundare. His poetry is replete with proverbs and other African traditional sayings to enrich his poetry. Some examples are:

The whip that carved weal's
On the first wife
Will descend from the rafter some day
To give the new bride a stroke of history
Songs of the Market Place p.24

A noose does not become a chicken's neck
Songs of the Market Place p.40

Ah! The night has gone on fire. Is anyone still asking
what became of the beard of the hill?
Moon songs p. 62

The buffalo has fallen in a jungle of blunted knives
Songs of the Season p. 78

These proverbs are from Yoruba culture. Some have been

reworked or refashioned in the process of poetic creativity while others are left in their original flavour or sense. For instance the saying *'baba ñjóná, a ñ bèrè irungbòn* (father is burning, you are asking for the beard) is reworked to produce the poetic lines, "the night has gone on fire. Is anyone still asking what became of the beard of the hill?" The point to note in this proverb is the folly in asking a ridiculous or needless question. It is common knowledge that in a fire incident, the hair and beard are parts of the body that will first get consumed. If any part of the body will survive the fire, it cannot be the beard. The obvious message is that the 'beard of the hill' is already burnt in the night fire. In most cases, Osundare's use of proverbs is to illuminate contemporary experience.

Like proverbs, idiom is another means by which African literary works are embellished to reflect African culture, religions, politics, economy and agriculture. Examples of Africanised idiomatic expressions abound in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*, some of which are underlined in the following statements:

Perhaps I spoke with **water in my mouth** p. 4

Your duty is to **bring word back to us** p. 17

Otikpo, let us go outside and **whisper together** p. 22

If a man says yes, his **chi also says yes** p. 28

Ezeulu was still **hearing in his mind** p. 166

'Water in my mouth', 'bring word back to us', 'whisper together', 'hearing in his mind' are idioms reflecting African thinking and wisdom. They are expressed through an English language that is not influenced by European worldview.

Examples of Africanised idiomatic expressions are also found in many of Osundare's collections of poems.

The sky carries a boil of anguish/let it burst
The Eye of the Earth p.27

He knows perfect well where his yam is oiled
Songs of the Season p.14

A thousand moths cannot quench the candle of the moon
Moonsongs p. 52

The 'burst of boil' as expressed in the 'sky carries a boil of anguish (let it burst)' is a Yoruba idiomatic way of expressing the return of relief after a painful or traumatic experience. It is only when a boil bursts that the sufferer can heave a sigh of relief. Prior to the burst of the boil, the experience is usually that of pain and discomfort. 'Yam is oiled' is a Yoruba expression which has its equivalent in the English idiom, 'bread is buttered'. Yam is usually eaten with palm oil among African people. As an idiomatic expression, 'where his yam is oiled' connotes his source of livelihood.

Both yam and oil combine to provide energy for the body and sustain life. In the context of the poem, the idiom is an indirect reference to the source of income of the unprincipled university teacher.

4.2.2 African Folktales and Fables

Some African writers incorporate folktales, fables and other parabolic modes in their literary works. Examples can be drawn from Niyi Osundare's *Songs of the Season*. The following lines derived their source from traditional folktales

often told under moon light:

Once upon a time
When lizard built mansions
And the tortoise wore a crown p. 114
Once beside the time
When toads bestrode the land p. 115

The world of folktale is populated by animals with human behaviour; the date of the story is located in a mythical past when fantasies and the absurd constitute the norm. The raconteur usually begins his tale in the manner indicated in the introductory lines above.

Fables and other parabolic modes also occupy a significant section in *Songs of the Season*. A fable is a story with animal characters which teaches a moral lesson. While calling for caution and wisdom in relating to the greedy politician – military or civilian, Osundare in the fabulist poem, 'different dreams' narrates the story of the leopard and the sheep.

Let us go and eat, says the leopard
To the starving sheep
Unthinking the woolly head
Follows the cunning claw
Too late the eaten finds his folly
So fast the eater finds his food p.107

The poem hints at disaster and regret for rulers who are insensitive to the needs of the people. The poem 'crying hyena' ends on the note:

The king's only son had just
disappeared into the spotted beast's capacious
stomach.
The king whose only son fell a victim of the
carnivorous hyena, has prior to the incident been
told by his people
Yours majesty, a tribe of hyena
There is in this land, which threatens
The future of our fold
His insensitive response was
Hyenas! Hyenas. Why must you people always
find something to fret about?

The poem has a moral message to rulers who are indifferent to the complaints of their people.

4.2.3 African Symbols and Images

The use of traditional African symbols and images also features in African literary works. Okot p. Bitek, for instance, spices his poetry with symbols from Acoli oral songs in "Song of Lawino". Such symbolic artefacts include spear, horn and bull. In *Song of Lawino*, Lawino pleads that Ocol should

Ask for a spear that you will trust
One that does not bend easily
Like the earthworm
Ask them to restore your manhood! p. 195

The spear in the context of the poem is not only a war implement but also a symbol of manliness especially that of sexual virility as 'does not bend easily, 'restore your manhood suggest'.

The 'horn' is another symbolic object in Acoli society. According to Heron (1976:46), every Acoli young man in the countryside has a horn on which he can produce his own personal note or group of notes so that he can be identified from a long way off by those who know him. Blowing horn is thus a common countryside practice among Acoli young men. Lawino says:

And my name blew
Like a horn
Among the Payira p. 59

The blowing of Lawino's name compared to the blowing of a horn. Like p'Bitek, Okigbo also employs symbols and images from the African environment in 'Elegy for Slit-drum. There is the image of the elephant to symbolize political, social and economic status and power. The fall of the political rulers of the first republic is portrayed as a parallel to the fall of the elephant; hence

The elephant has fallen p. 69

There are also references to other animals in the poem such as snake and panther symbolizing the dangerous political situation in Nigeria during the first republic.

4. Conclusion

This paper has identified and discussed the use of indigenous language and indigenised forms of English in some African literary texts. These features portray African languages, traditions, norms, speech mannerisms, thought patterns and

other ways of life in spite of the use of English. The examples discussed above are to stimulate the new generation African/Nigerian writers to sustain past efforts of their predecessors by incorporating and preserving indigenous languages in their creative works. Parents should encourage their children and family members to use indigenous languages at home and beyond so that they can use these languages in their creative endeavours. Indigenous language must not die in our/their time.

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18. Linguistic Politeness Theory and Globalisation: between Western Canons and Non-Western Possibilities

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In the 21st century with globalization and its attendant challenges which are wholistic and integrating, there is a crying need to accommodate other ways of “being polite” from non-western perspective of linguistic politeness by scholars. Citing illustrative data from Hausa and Fulfulde, this paper argues that this linguistic ‘marriage of convenience’ has many benefits for languages and societies in the 21st century world in education, governance and diplomacy.

1. Introduction – Making Sense of the World

Communication is a social activity requiring the coordinated efforts of two or more individuals. According to Gumperz (1988), communication is effective through the use of language which is a system of systems that uses symbols to express ideas and emotions about the social world. Within the contextual meaning is a central theory of linguistic politeness – social appropriates or socially correct as Lakoff (1975) would put it. In other words, is refers to a situation in our use of language to communicate, in the words of Brown (1980) ‘saying and doing things in such a way as to take account of other peoples’ feelings.’ This helps us, as opined by Ehlich

(1992), to achieve social effective living. Following this introduction, would be an excursion to this theory in its western formulation, then a discourse on ways of conceptualizing globalization and its attendant challenges, arguing for the necessity of putting intellectual searchlight on alternative ways of conceptualizing politeness in non-western societies and the need to accommodate those alternatives for the obvious benefits in education, governance, diplomacy; what follows presently is politeness theory in its given western framework(s). The presentation in this paper would mainly concentrate on the theoretical review with few illustrative data.

2. Towards Conceptualising Globalization

Globalisation is the defining process of the present age. It is overwhelming and perplexing that whether we like it or not we must learn to live with it and utilize its good aspects and correct its deficiencies to make the world a better place than we found it (Menegbe 2005:3). The popular saying nowadays, is that the world has shrunk into a little village. What is meant by this statement is that the world has become so connected in our time, that events in some corner of the globe ate almost immediately knows and carry an instant impact, on others living far away from such events. (Osofisan 2005:1-2). Globalisation characteristically, is directly associated with change, transformation, modernity and increasingly interdependence. People around the world are more connected to each other than ever before through globalization. It is also a multifaceted phenomenon. It has been defined differently by different people. Some focus on economic aspect and hence emphasis the global economy

outlook, whereas some focus on the cultural aspects of this phenomenon and how globalisation has affected different aspects of the culture, still others focus on the political aspects of the structure of globalization, yet others equate globalization with advanced technology, particularly in the area of communication and transport, globalization is all these and more. Others are for it, while others are against it there is quite a heated polemics on it. This is however not our concern here. But the aspect that is central to this paper is the cultural and social aspects of globalization in terms of connection and interaction using human linguistic science, more specifically, its application on appropriate or deference on language use-politeness theory, let us look how this theory is conceptualized in the western epistemological framework and what link it has to globalization.

3. Politeness Theory: Western Canons

Grundy (2000) citing Lakoff (1986a) states that politeness principles have been considered to have wide descriptive power in respect of language use. Seen as the exercise of language choice to create context intended to match addressee's notion of how he or she should be addressed Grundy (2001:88) politeness phenomena are a paradigm example of pragmatic usage. Among the aspects of context that are particularly determinate of language choice in the domain of politeness are power-distance relationship of interactants and the extent to which a speaker imposes on or requires something of their addressees to create an implicated context that is to say. The speaker stands in relating X to Y to the addressees in respect of act Y, that matches the one assumed by the addressee. It is a manifestation of the wider

concept of etiquette or appropriate behaviour.

Within Linguistic pragmatics, politeness theory the expression of deference, distance, or adjustment of the message in social relationships was first developed in Brown and Levinson (1987) providing strategies, in the western sense, used in communication using language to save the hearer's face-self-worth, self-respect. Since the publication in the last two decades other works following Levinson (1983) Fasold (1999) Grundy (2001). But in all these proposals on the politeness theory their proposals follows a euro centric western perspective leaving an intellectual lacuna for not looking at the theory in non-western parameters. In order to fill this seeming lacuna there is an attempt to academically redress this so to say, this will be what will follow in the next section.

4. Linguistic Politeness Theory: Non-Western Possibilities

Chomsky (1986) argued for linguistic universals that human languages share as regards their forms. One will extend that these universals are not restricted to form, they also manifest in function in the area of contextual use of language to express, social relationships, ideas, feelings, and emotions which are central to the main goals of natural languages for communication around the globe. Against their backdrop it is believed that linguistic politeness theory. The possibility of politeness in Hausa and Fulfulde is evident from the above background explanation. But let us have a sketch of the two languages in question before going on to explicate on the manifestations of politeness phenomenon in communication in the language (the non-western possibilities).

Before going on to establish the accessibility of accommo-

dating other ways of being polite let me start by presenting my predecessor on the standpoints of Non-English and Non-Western societies which are significantly different from Western societies of Britain and American, such as Gu 1990, Hernandez-Flores, 1999, de Kadt (1999) who cited evidences all pointing to the need to view linguistic politeness less dependent on face wants alone. For instance, in Greece (mainland) solidarity in group relationship motivates widespread use of diminutives (Terkourfafi 1999) Mexico and Zululand requires the normative politeness which takes precedence over strategic or volitional politeness, evidence has been cited in Jibril (2005) on use of honorifics in Hausa as politeness markers. What all these amount to is this: with globalization and its attendant challenges there is need look at this alternative deference parameters.

4.1 A Glimpse of Fulfulde and Hausa Languages

4.1.1 Fulfulde

The Fulani people who call themselves Fulbe, inhabit on area stretching from Senegambia in West Africa to Nigeria Cameroon and beyond, in the East. Traditionally they are pastoral people, who herd their cattle in the West African Savannah Fulfulde the language is variously call *Fulfulde* pulaar or pular, peul, Fula, and Ful. McIntosh (1984:25) it is a member of West Atlantic branch of Niger Congo language family (cf Greenberg 1970). It is international and has SVO order in neutral sentences. It also has a highly developed nominal class-system, which has attracted attention of linguistic scholarship in this area of the language.

4.1.2 Hausa

The Hausa language is believed to be most widely spoken among the Chadic branch of Afro-Asiatic language family. It is the lingua franca of Northern Nigeria and a widely used language in Africa. Hausa is very much used in trade, media (local and international) and is one alternative language of the big three (Igbo and Yoruba) cited in the Nigerian constitution for largest number of speakers south of the Sahara. It has attracted scholarship in language, literature, and general linguistics some of its areas seem to be still virgin (e.g. present study pragmatics).

4.2 Linguistic Politeness in Ffulfulde and Hausa

4.2.1 Ffulfulde

Politeness is commonly manifested in ffulfulde it is usually anchored on two concepts, to my mind these are: *ndottaako* (civility gentility) and *ndimaku* (selflessness) to the best of my knowledge the fulbes are some of the most polite people across the globe whether one looks at politeness (normative) politeness (strategic) let us look at a few illustrative data based on the linguistic act of polite request.

There are various ways of expressing politeness in request by Ffulfulde speakers such as:

- a. Haa/dallu plus subjunctive
 1. *Haa mi nodda moddibo* (Adamawa)
English translation: Let me call the teacher
Dallu nodda moddibo (Sokoto)
 2. *Haa mi yama mo* (Adamawa)
Daal mi yama mo (Sokoto)
English translation: let me ask him

- b. *Useni* > please
 Ga Allah >
3. *Useni, do dum laawol naa?* (Adamawa)
 Ga Allah daal ngol laawol naa? (Sokoto)
 English translation: Please, is this the road?
- b. *Le* – Would you...?
4. *Defu nyamodu Alhaaji le?* (Adamawa)
 Ngam Allah defu nyamdu (Sokoto)
 English: Please, cook his food.
- d. Fulfulde law of superior reference
5. (a) *a nyanli jam*
 (b) *un bali jam.*

English translation: (a) Good morning (equal)
 (b) Good morning (Superior)

From the few illustrative data we can see that politeness phenomenon is manifest in Fulfulde but unlike the Anglo-Saxon framework it seems to be normative and value oriented rather than simply strategic.

4.2.2 Hausa

Linguistic politeness phenomena in Hausa is captured in Kirk-Greene's (1973) **mutumin kirkii** 'Goodman' where Hausa man is shown to be a rounded personality reflected in expressions like *cin-mutunci*, *cin-fuska*, *shimfidar-fuska* all

relating to individual's self-esteem or face. However, let us provide a taxonomy to capture ways of being polite in Hausa.

A. Power – Distance Relations

In Hausa, there is an established normative and social politeness between superior and inferior (subordinate) examples of this are:

1. *Ana Zuwa...*

English translation: A moment, please (somebody will attend to you)

2. *Aka ga sunana.*

English translation: my name was seen.

B. Naming Strategies

Naming is also another politeness making strategies in Hausa and this is accepted as the norm. People do not normally address people in authority directly through an indirect way (polite behavior). Examples:

3. *Malam, ina fatar ban tad a ku ba.*

English translation: teacher, I hope I did not wake you (plural reference)

4. *Maigida, ya kamata a duba wannan matsala.*

English translation: master, sir it would be better if this matter is addressed.

C. Greeting Patterns

The way addresser relates with addressees is also a relevant marker of politeness in Hausa.

Example:

5. *ai, sannuku da zuwa...*

D. Honorific Forms of Address

Since our observation is that politeness marking in Hausa seems to be normative the relevant honorific forms in Hausa have deference values, as in:

6. *ranka ya dade sannu da zuwa*

English translation: may you live long you're welcome.

7. *mai martaba sarki ya haishe ku.*

English translation: his highness the Emir gives you (the people) his greeting.

E. Tone of Voice

This is also another way of showing polite behaviour in Hausa. It works in this way, the inferior maintains a respectfully low voice when addressing or talking to his/her superior. On the other hand, a superior's voice adjustments or coughs will be a pointer to the inferior that the elder is to come.

On a final note these are representative strategies of politeness markers in Hausa which do not match the Anglo-Saxon versions of politeness.

5. Conclusion

Thus far, we have shown that the strategies of marking or expressing politeness differ from culture-to-culture, even though there are certain aspects of politeness marking that are

universal. As African cultures and people continue to interact, especially with the western world, certain aspects of politeness marking that are unique to African peoples and cultures are gradually being eroded in preference to those of the west. This is one of the greatest consequences of globalisation. African languages and cultures are under severe threat of extinction due mainly to the fact that our world is fast becoming a global village and Africa now sees the world and events in it from the point of the west.

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19. Language Convergence & Urbanization in Africa: The Case of Chinedum Ofomata's *Ihe Ojoo Gbaa Afọ*

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African literature presents a classic or typical case of language convergence. This convergence is between European languages such as English and African Languages such as Igbo. This paper identifies language convergence in the definition of African literature, as well as in its controversial origin. Furthermore, it identifies convergence in the historical imaginations in African literature and even in African literary expressions in the indigenous languages. Using Ofomata's *Ihe Ojoo Gbaa Afọ...*, it is shown also that the influence of English on African literature goes beyond the aforementioned to the more complex issue of urbanization. Our finding is that, while French literature is basically in French and Russian literature in Russian, African literature has come to be an inextricable amalgamation of European languages and African.

Introduction

Most literary traditions have found expressions basically in their languages. Any Russian, French, Chinese or English literary work done outside the language of that tradition, if at all, may be in a very negligible minority. For example, to find a Russian literary work originally done (not translated) in Chinese, German, English or the Igbo language may not be very common. However, in the case of African literature,

which expectedly, should be uncommon to find in languages outside Africa, the domineering works are in English, French, Portuguese, etc., and less on African languages. The situation is such that some literary scholars and even linguists not only define African literature to the exclusion of those done in the indigenous languages, but also restrict its origin to only the time of the advent of these foreign languages to the continent.

This paper, therefore, is to show the convergence of English (other European languages) and African languages in African literature as well as to highlight the possibility of African literature in African languages. It demonstrates how African literature in African languages could also, like most modern literature in English language, creatively expose the realities of our urban-rural imbalance as well as Western-African imbalance. It further reveals the linguistic implications of urbanization in Nigeria, for example, where it endangers small languages and shifts major languages to the “glory” of the English language or at worst its pidginized form.

Definition of Terms

Some key words that make up the topic need to be defined especially in the context, which they are used in this paper. They include language, urbanization and African literature.

Language: There are several definitions of language, including Chomsky (1968), Sapir (1921) etc., but here we use Essien (2005:3) which defines it as “a system of structured vocal symbols by means of which human beings make meaning and communicate and interact with each other in a given community”. From this definition, we find that as a system, the components of language are ordered, not haphazard. It is

spoken. It is peculiar to man and arbitrary. Language is creative, that is why the speakers of any language can express whatever they want to express in that language.

Urbanization: This is the process of developing or transforming a rural area/community into a city or urban centre usually, with a specific minimum population. Although Africa is the least urbanized continent, it is said to now have the highest rate of urbanization. It was projected that about 368 million people will reside in Africa's urban centres by the year 2000. This was based on the fact that about 27 percent of Africa's population lived in the cities by 1980 (Salau 1992: 21). Several factors influence the rate of urbanization in Africa, ranging from political, economic, religious, industrial to environmental.

African Literature: Elechi Amadi (2003:70) defines African Literature as one "written about Africans and for Africans", while Achebe in Gorlier (1989:15) asserts that African literature as "the sum of all the national and ethnic literatures of Africa". Here, we use Ebele Ekoh's (2005:13) definition of African literature as

... a hybrid of African experiences expressed through African and European languages, with distinguishing characteristics like the incorporation of certain oral aesthetic values and the spontaneity of language that is sometimes "panel beaten" to suit characters and to reflect the transliteration of different mother tongues.

Origin of African Literature: Before or after Colonization.

It can be observed that current definition of African literature is an expression of convergence. Since it is a hybrid of African experiences expressed through European languages (English, French, etc.) and African languages (Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba, Kiswahili, Ibibio, etc.), convergence is also the root of the controversial origin of African literature. A certain misconception that still prevails, and even upheld by linguists of exoglosic school of thought, is that Africans were not familiar with literature and art, especially in its modern form, until their contact with the Western world. They believe, for example, that Nigerian literature began with the advent of the colonial masters who introduced the English language as the medium of instruction in their schools. They further assert that it was the recipients of this education through European languages that pioneered the emergence of national literary and art works.

Writing on the origin of Black African literature in French, Ogiike (1990: 17) states that in 1948, it made its officially concerted debut with Leopold Senghor's *Anthologie de la nouvelle poesie negree et malgache de la langue Francais*. Senghor is notably among the early African recipients of Western education through French. This school of thought tends not to even subscribe to the inclusion of literary works in African languages as part of African literature.

Some other scholars backed up by the linguists of the endoglosic school of thought as well as this writer believe that African literature had flourished in African languages before contact with the western world and or their languages. According to Henrik Clarke (1967:283), before the breaking up, the social structure of the West African states of Ghana,

Mali and Songhai, and the internal strife and chaos that made the slave trade possible, the Africans lived in a society where university life was fairly common and scholars were beheld with reference. He particularly pointed out that from the early 14th century of the Moorish invasion of the 1591, the city of Timbuktu, with the University of Sankore in the Songhai Empire was the intellectual Centre of Africa. Black scholars were enjoying a renaissance that was known and respected throughout most of Africa and parts of Europe. While scholars from Sankore were installed as professors in Morocco and Egypt, the Arabs were not always equal to the requirements of Sankore. Commenting on one of the scholars of Sankore and his intellectual and literary accomplishment, Clark states thus:

Ahmed Baba was the last Chancellor of University of Sankore. He was one of the greatest African scholars of the late sixteenth century. His life is a brilliant example of the range and depth of West African intellectual activity before the colonial era. Ahmed Baba was the author of more than forty books; nearly every one of these books had a different theme. He was in Timbuktu when it was invaded by the Moroccans in 1592, and he was one of the first citizens to protest this occupation of his beloved hometown. Ahmed Baba, along with other scholars, was imprisoned and eventually exiled to Morocco. During his expatriation from Timbuktu, his collection of 1,600 books, one of the richest libraries of his day was lost.

By the time of the Moorish occupation, West Africa entered a sad period of decline characterised by wreck and ruin. The entrance of the Europeans and meeting the latter conditions

made them to assume that nothing of order and value had ever existed in these countries. Unfortunately, this mistaken impression, too often repeated, has influenced the interpretation of African life in history for about four hundred years. The great Ahmed Baba's over forty books prior to the coming of the Europeans must have been written in the indigenous languages of West Africa.

It is pertinent to go into all these details to prove that if African literature or Nigerian literature, for example, must include or is solely literature in European languages, then its origin is undeniably rooted in language convergence.

Historical Imagination in African Literature

As has been somewhat stated above, the historical imagination in African literature has been distorted. It has been heavily influenced by European languages such as English as well as the contradictory processes of urbanization and globalisation. It is generally acknowledged that historical representations in various cultural expressions is problematic enough. For example, a literal representation of Nigerian historical imaginations using Nigerian languages is not an easy task. However, this task is compounded when it is to be accomplished using other cultural expressions – foreign languages. There must, therefore, of necessity, be a convergence, a fusion or a juxtaposition in which case one has to dominate the other. This tends to be case in African literature, which has been both co-extensive and contradictory.

The African literary representation of history has been conditioned by a set of responses that have their origin in slavery and colonization. The memory of the slave trade

haunts the African imagination like a dream. It is part of the black man's history that has continued to dictate its fortunes. According to Emenyeonu (1990:xii), Western poets and novelists such as Joyce Cary's, *the Conrads*, all lied about Africa and Africans, even Shakespeare. Their disdain for literary works with African historical imaginations was not hidden, especially those with expressions in the indigenous languages. That explains the reasons why the western literary critics labelled Achebe's great work '*Things Fall Apart*' as a mere translation of Igbo proverbs into English.

Ogike (1990:87) presents a good picture of historical imagination in African literature influenced by African cultural and linguistic background as well as that influenced by western linguistic and cultural background. African historical time is determined by agricultural seasons, (planting, harvesting, etc.) an important event, a phenomenon such as death of a great ancestor, the eclipse of the sun, an epidemic, invasion of farms by locusts, first appearance of the whiteman, etc. As a result of this, black Africans do not have any common determinant of historical time except for such universally visible phenomenon like the eclipse of the sun. The *Iriji Oḣurū* (New Yam Festival) among the Igbo cyclic time, marks the beginning and end of harvest. This dependence of the African year makes it difficult to be determined by a fixed number of days. Ogike quotes Camara Laye (1958:58) as having captured historical imagination of time literarily in his *African Child (Le Enfant noir)* when he points out that,

The festival had no fixed date, since it depended on the ripening of the rice and this, in turn depended on the

good will of the weather. Perhaps it depended still more on the good will of the gods of the soil, who must be consulted.

Furthermore, Laye shows that a mere glance of the consumer crop preserved in a barn or hanging on the ceiling over the fireplace is very revealing. These "corn cubs could also be used as a rural calendar. As the time for the next harvest approached, their number decreased and finally, they disappeared completely". In Africa also, months are counted in terms of the new moon, while weeks are counted in terms of market days and the daily time is marked in by the sunrise and the position of the sun to the body. Conversely, in the Judeo-Christian Europe, the historical time has been landmarked and standardised by a single event, the birth of Jesus Christ. They have artificialised time with the invention of the chronometer and this is expressed in literary works of this background. Also, African writers use the African omen as a literary device to create the impression of fear and tragic suspense, as a promotion of an imminent catastrophe. They believe that there are signs for everyone's death no matter how humble his origin is.

On the other hand, the western world believes that great signs foretell the death of great men only. This was captured by Shakespeare in *Julius Caesar* (Act 2 Scene 2), "when beggars die, there are no comets seen". African writers also use totems and sacred animals in their literary expressions. In Camara Laye's *African Child*, he presents the totem as the snake. He explains that he owes his success in life to his family totem. Slavery, being part of the historical imagination, has equally caught the expression of disdain by the African

writers with this background. Wole Soyinka's *Dance of the Forests*, is a good example.

Mata Kharibu; I want them taken away immediately. I do not want sight or smell of them after sunset. If no boat can be found, drown them.

According to Ogude (1990:12), Mata Kharibu, the typical African leader condemns his military commanders and his men for refusing to fight a stupid war.

One fact that emerges from what has been said is that historical imagination in Nigerian or African literature is a portrayal of convergence of both western and indigenous languages. Although African writers have strived to project the black aesthetics in their work, there is no gain saying that the articulation of these aesthetics in an alien cultural expression, no doubt, introduces elements of this alien expression into the historical imagination. Also, it emasculates and affects the autonomy and existence of this imagination. According to Obiechina (1994:23),

As long as a human community preserves its language, it also preserves those built-in habits within the language which ensure for the group not only its habits of communicating reality, but also its modes of interpreting and responding to experience. That is why loss of language or its considerable emasculation, radically and detrimentally affects the autonomy and existence of that human community.

The autonomy and existence of African communities such as

Nigeria, is radically affected by the emasculation of their indigenous languages. This is most evident in their preservation and projection of their historical imagination using foreign or colonial languages.

African Literature in a European and or an African Language

Although in the working definition, literature in African languages is recognised as part of African literature, in reality, it is hardly recognised. While African literary works in English and their authors are celebrated, recognised and discussed in several literary fora; those whose works are in the indigenous languages are not. It is doubtful if any Nigerian writer in indigenous language has received any national honour or medal. In fact, some literary scholars tend to still debate the inclusion of literature in indigenous languages as part of Nigerian or African literature. Considering this, the pertinent question is, should African literature be in European, African or African and European languages? Are there Russian literature in English, German literature in Portuguese or Chinese literature in the Japanese language? (There may be translations of original works). Why should Nigerian or African literature be different? We understand our past (Colonisation). Most other countries or continents also suffered colonisation, but they have overcome its shackles and returned to their linguistic routes.

While it is not possible to discard literary works in European languages in Nigeria or Africa, it is possible to translate most of these works into Nigerian/African languages. It is also possible to encourage more writing and writers in the indigenous languages. Though it is said that Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* has sold more than five million

copies in the English language alone and been translated into 46 (Obiechina 1994:31) and more recently 50 (Makinde 2006:37) languages of the world, including all the major international languages, it has neither been officially translated into Igbo, the mother tongue of the writer nor any indigenous Nigerian language. At best the home-video producers have tried to act and produce it as a film with interpretation in Igbo. The works that won Soyinka the Noble Laureate has neither been translated into Yoruba, which has become one of the languages in the Internet, nor any other indigenous language.

The argument that these indigenous languages lack adequate vocabulary to express such works is no longer tenable (Iwuchukwu and Oji 2005:2). The creative ability of every natural language makes it possible to use any language to express whatever thing that one wishes to express in it. Essien (2005:5) believes that the Ibibio language can be used to teach chemistry at the secondary school level. He maintains that any “language can be enriched and used to play the role its speakers want it to play”. Centuries ago, the English language was described as ‘vulgar’, ‘immature’, ‘unpolished’ and limited, but the English people prepared and developed it to be what it is today. It is also true that if we want great artists – poets, playwrights, novelists, musicians, etc., we must make it possible for such talented people to acquire such facility in language as will enable them to express their imagination, feelings, and insights freely (Essien, 1977:6).

The case of Chinedum Ofomata’s *The Ojọọ Gbaa Afọ*

Chinedum Ofomata, a linguist and publisher, is a Nigerian writer who has decided to use his mother tongue to convey

his literary feelings and imaginations. He has written about twelve titles spanning through grammar, prose, poetry and drama; in the standard Igbo language. *Ihe Ojoo Gbaa Afo...* (when evil lasts for a year/years...), is one of his works published in 1999. The title of the work is a phrase cut out of the Igbo proverb that says '*Ihe Ojoo Gbaa Afo O Diiri Onye Metara ya*' (When evil lasts for years, it is still for the person who committed it). Ofomata, through the two hundred and fifty two page novel, demonstrates the ability of using indigenous Nigerian or African languages to project Nigerian or African literature. In prose form, he makes a modest contribution to modern literature, especially in the area of urban realism and other problems confronting Nigeria and other third world nations. According to Ekoh (2005:14), 'the second generation of African writers are contemporary younger artists who look inwards into their society to question the gross corruption, the crash materialism and the violence that seem to be the bane of Africa's urban reality'. She mentions such writers as Festus's *Violence and the Contract*, Kole Omotosho's *Memory of our Recent Boom* as well as Ifeoma Okoye's *Men without Ears*. Ofomata's *Ihe Ojoo Gbaa Afo* is certainly one of them.

Ofomata uses his major character, Ikenna, who left his parents and village to an urban centre, immediately after his university education, to seek for employment to reveal one of the social problems confronting African countries like Nigeria – rural-urban migration. This, of course, has its attendant negative impact on our rural communities. It was for this reason that Ikenna's parents simply resigned to fate once they realised that he had moved from the village to work in the urban area.

Kemgbe Ikenna jiri guchaa akwukwo na mahadum, were nweta oru n' Enugwu ka nne ya na nnaya ji wee mara n' ezie na aturu mutara Ebule gba aka nwa'.

(It was since Ikenna finished his education and got employment at Enugwu, that the parents really knew that any sheep whose offspring is a ram does not really have any offspring).

Ordinarily, when one secures employment, it is a thing of joy, but it was a thing of sorrow and mixed feelings for Ikenna's parents, because he was to settle in an urban centre with its attendant problems.

There is rural-urban imbalance in most African countries. In Nigeria, for example, most rural areas lack basic amenities of life and employment opportunities. This encourages migration to the urban centres with their corrupt tendencies that negatively affect the innocent migrants. True to their apprehension, the simple caring Ikenna, no sooner than later, turned into a proud, boastful, morally inept, uncaring and extravagant boy. Ikenna abandoned his parents and siblings in the village. Whenever he gets home, he spends few days and returns to the urban centre.

Beyond the rural-urban drift, Ofomata highlights a salient problem confronting African nations and Nigeria in particular. He reflects on the prevailing societal norm where most Nigerians and Africans migrate in thousands to the western world – Europe and America to seek greener pastures. This has culminated in serious 'brain drain' syndrome in Nigeria and Africa. Like Ikenna's parents, most Nigerians and other Africans are apprehensive when their

children travel to the Western countries for greener pastures. These Africans get to Europe and America, and like Ikenna, find it difficult to return to their home country and when they do so, they stay a few days and return to the developed countries.

‘Ikenna chefuru otu ezi na ulo ya siri biri, siri eri nri, eyi akwa’

(Ikenna forgot his family, the way they fed and clothed themselves).

Most of the best brains in Nigeria/Africa left for greener pastures and refused to return to contribute to the developmental needs of their communities or countries or continent. Ofomata presents the rural-urban imbalance to be symbolic of a more serious problem, the African-Western imbalance. Writing on the brain drain, as a serious continental malaise, Folatile-Deji (2006:46) states that the migration of academics from Africa to the universities in Europe and the United States is having a damaging effect on the continent’s higher education. He reports that about 30 percent of Africa’s university trained professionals and up to 50,000 Africans with PhD now live and work outside the continent. This problem is most particularly acute in sub-Saharan Africa with Nigeria taking the lead. This loss of a few of the continents best lecturers and researchers means the loss of a large chunk of its academic base.

Just as Ikenna and his wife were forced home by the death of his father, most Africans in the diaspora, often times are forced back home by the death of their parents, spouses and very close relatives. Using the long stay of people like Ikenna

and the wife in the urban centres, who become alienated from the rich culture of their communities/villages, Ofomata also highlights how the long stay of the Africans in the Western world has made them aliens to the rich cultural heritage of their people, thus creating both social, cultural and linguistic conflicts. Nkemdirim (Ikenna's wife) was forced to go home with the news of the death of Ikenna's father. Her long absence from the home made her not to fit into the demands of the *Ụmụokpụ* (women born in that village) who had to perform part of the funeral rites of Ikenna's father. It is pertinent to observe that this clash of culture is a direct result of urbanization or westernisation, which in itself is as a result of the convergence of both cultures and their languages in particular.

The high incidence of divorce that characterises our urban centres nay the western world is also captured by Ofomata. He used Ikenna's divorce with his wife Nkemdirim on the basis of incompatibility to achieve this. The hasty manner in which he entered into the marriage jettisoning any contribution from his parents, is a critique on the urban influence as well as the manner in which the western world contract their marriages which encourages divorce. It is reported that the rate of divorce in America is above 70 percent. In Africa, marriage is not just a personal or family affair but communal. Although they tolerate polygamy, the divorce rate is low, especially after following due process.

Ofomata did not fail to use his piece to highlight the crash materialism of our time which tends to be the bane of our urban reality and westernisation. The migration of Ikenna to the urban centre influenced his taste and spending habit.

'kengbe Ikenna malitere ọrụ bekee n'Enugwu, Ọ naghị eme ka onye si na ụlo ogbenye pụta. Mgbe ọ bụla I hụrụ ya, I ga-eche na ọ bụ nna ya na-achị ndị obodo ha'.

(Since Ikenna started working at Enugwu, he does not behave as one from a poor family. Anytime you see him, you will think that his father is the king or ruler of his town) Ofomata (1999:17).

Again,

'Ọ dighi ụdiri ihe e ji akpo egwụ Ikenna enweghi. Egwụ ọ bula e tiri ọhụrụ, ma nke Igbo ma nke bekee, ebe izizi I ga-anụ ya yabụ na be Ikenna', Ofomata 1999: 2 (There is no type of musical and electronic gadget that Ikenna does not have. Any new musical album released in English or Igbo will be first heard in Ikenna's house).

Ikenna spends money on parties and girls, yet it was hunger that killed the father in the village. Ofomata presented this contradiction succinctly when he said,

'Nna Ikenna nwurụ ụgbụ a bụ aguu gbụrụ ya'.

(This Ikenna's father that is dead was killed by hunger).

Here, Ofomata exposes the harmful effect of urbanization and westernisation in Nigeria/Africa, which has eroded the people's value of life. Materialism, social, cultural and linguistic conflicts, moral depravity and violence tend to be the direct negative outcomes.

Another special feature of urbanisation in Nigeria, in the context of language convergence, is its ability to eliminate

completely or reduce strong attachment to the mother tongue. Once a rural area is given the status of an urban centre, the accompanying language convergence first results in the stifling of the use of the mother tongue of both the original and in-coming settlers in favour of English. Secondly, with time and growth of both the urban status and language convergence, the quest for expression in the mother tongue is completely eroded in most of the settlers to give way to the English language or pidgin. In this circumstance, the smaller languages are endangered, while the major languages experience a shift. Some fifty years ago, most of the original settlers of Abuja, Nigeria's capital, spoke their mother tongue and Hausa. Visitors to the place must be able to speak any of the languages for any meaningful interaction. Today, with Abuja as an urban centre, and the resultant language convergence, the mother tongue of the original settlers is endangered. There is a shift in the language of the main settlers, and the major beneficiary is English or at worst its pidginized form.

Similarly, one of the greatest hazards posed by the migration of Africans to Europe and America, is not only the loss of manpower, but also the loss of the indigenous African languages. The African languages have continually been endangered by their convergence with European languages. This is why most African returnees from the western world had come to feel 'embarrassed' that they were welcomed, addressed or admonished in their mother tongues. This was the feeling captured in Nkemdirim when she was addressed by the leader of the Umuokpu as she returned to the village several years after her marriage to Ikenna in the urban city. She was only forced to come to the village because of the

death of her father-in-law. The leader of the Umuokpu's journey into Igbo idioms, proverbs, riddles and play on words not only estranged Nkemdirim who had lost touch of this, but also provoked her to flare up, thus incurring further, the wrath of the Umuokpu who descended heavily on her. Ofomata, using indigenous language, demonstrates urbanisation as a practical reflection of convergence of languages not only in the rural-urban set-up, but also in the African-Western set-up.

Conclusion

Nigerian/African literature, from definition, its origin, its historical imagination, in the indigenous or European languages, even reflecting on its urban realities, provides insight not only into the convergence of English and African languages, but also other European languages and the totality of their cultures. This tends to suggest that African literature, for sometime to come, remains an inextricable amalgamation of European and African languages. We recommend the translation of any serious African literary piece, in any European language, into the indigenous languages. Most importantly, literary works in African languages should be encouraged and accorded same recognition that works in European languages receive.

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20. Globalisation, Nationhood and Nigerian Literary Life*

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The Linguistic Association of Nigeria merits commendation for having successfully eked out resources at great pains to its members to organise this national conference at this very difficult moment of our national life when patriots find it hard to convince most of our political power wielders that national development is **knowledge-bound**. The feat is all the more glaring when it is remembered that the linguist – intellectual, like his peers in some other disciplines even including the sciences (e.g. the botanist and the zoologist) has seen his habitat virtually scorched out of existence by the country's unwarranted drift to a life of naked materialism; hence, the necessity of his/her having to infuse life into the celebrated Department of Linguistics and African (Nigerian) languages by incorporating the discipline of Communication Studies into it. This discipline is perceived as being economically more rewarding than that in the host department by the students who try to dance to the tune of the prevailing mode of life in the country. It is noteworthy, therefore, that the Conference tries in a way to dramatise the necessity of our various governments bringing about necessary changes in governance and, in particular, education so that the values traditionally encoded in the study of Linguistics will be enthusiastically reactivated and effectively strengthened and those embedded in Communication Studies appropriately dramatised for the

benefit of nation-building.

The theme of the Conference ("Language, Literature and Communication in a Dynamic World") is therefore very germane to the task facing the linguist in contemporary Nigerian society. Its literary dimension captures the spirit of the intellectual labours of the literary scholars intrigued by the problems raised by the connotative use of language in this era of globalisation, hence the title of the address as "Globalisation, Nationhood and Nigerian Literary Life".

The ideas will follow movements: first, the context: colonial past and neo-colonial present; second, literature in English, third, literature in French; and fourth, literature in Nigerian languages.

Context: Colonial Past and Neocolonial Present

Nigeria is a product of the long process of globalisation dating back to 1884-1885 when the adventurous Europeans met at Berlin to share out their conquered territories in Africa among themselves. The enterprise continued after the Second World War through the formation of such world organisations as World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Paris Club, World Trade Organisation and the United Nations. None of the bodies took African interests into consideration during their formation. Consequently, the Westerners adeptly manipulated the institutions to suit their interests.

Their hold on the institutions of the global village is very tight, although the Asian countries, especially Russia and China have been resisting it vehemently. Susantha Goonatilake's observations on it are incisive:

The European expansion of the last five hundred years with its different economic thrusts corresponding roughly to mercantilist, industrial and present neo-colonial ones, resulted in the throwing of a near complete cultural blanket has suppressed local culture, local arts, local systems of valid and relevant science and has resulted in a virtual cultural “genetic” wipeout. Diversity and originality, arts and ideas which are not of European origin are vanishing and culture is getting packaged, served in a plastic form, as the hegemonic machine of European culture moves on (v).

African countries, unlike their Asian counterparts, have not been forceful in asserting their presence in contemporary world civilisation.

Nigeria, in particular, seems to be entrapped by the Western strategies and propaganda. For example, she has enthusiastically embraced the Western values by adopting the British parliamentary system of government which she later jettisoned for the American presidential type. She has not thought it wise to quarry the mines of her cultural heritage in fashioning out the appropriate mode of democracy she needs. She has equally taken some other decisions along this line: she prefers foreign goods to locally made ones, hence her inability to effectively tackle the problem of the unemployment of the youth; she cherishes the habit of wearing even three-piece suits generally meant for people living in the cold regions of the world and not for those in tropical regions; she generally shies away from the practice of using hands to eat the delicacy of **eba/foofoo** in hotels for fear of being considered primitive; and, to take one more example, many of her political leaders

take pride in investing their loots in Western countries.

But of significance is her attitude to the languages and literatures of the land. It is virtually considered uncivilised to promote the use of the mother tongue in various forms of socio-political activities in the country, since English and French have been enthroned as the *lingua francas* of the country. Even in some circles, Nigeria is being perceived as a **bilingual** country, a perception that betrays the ignorance of the people to the discoveries in sociolinguistics. It is reasonable to believe that the ancestors of the English and French peoples would be shocked to see Nigerians accepting as a **fait accompli** the very situation which they themselves rejected in their various countries when their mother tongues were being dislodged by foreign languages as valid vehicles of cultural expression. From this perspective, it is rather absurd to see the Nigerian media being used to promote the use of a foreign language in the land at the expense of the indigenous languages.

Literature in English

Ayo Banjo has rightly observed that the “English language has become the most important language in the world today, and its position has been compared with that of Latin in medieval times” (i). Its use as the vehicle of literary expression in Nigeria/Africa has elicited angry responses from many writers and critics. The most vociferous is the celebrated one from Obi Wali who has nationalistically asserted that French literature is distinct from German literature because it is written in French and not in German. “What therefore is now described as African literature in English and French”, he affirms,

... is a clear contradiction and a false proposition just as 'Italian literature in Hausa' would be. There is little doubt that African languages will face inevitable extinction if they do not embody some kind of intelligent literature, and the way to hasten it is by continuing in our present illusion that we can produce African literature in English and French (13-15).

Chinua Achebe's reaction to the thunderbolt has more or less offered a literary angle to Ayo Banjo's observation and helped to popularise the view that literature in English is the national literature of Nigeria. Achebe proudly tells us that he has accepted English as the language of his creative imagination because of its status in a multilingual country like Nigeria. To him, no ethnic literature commands a national audience like that of English. Specifically, he asserts that,

A national literature is one that takes the whole nation for its province and has a realised or potential audience throughout its territory. In other words, a literature that is written in a national language. An ethnic literature is one which is available only to one ethnic group within the nation. If you take Nigeria as an example, the national literature, as I see it is the literature written in English, and the ethnic literatures are Hausa, Ibo, Yoruba, Efik, Edo, Ijaw, etc. (56).

He, however, subtly adds that the future political mood in the country may bring about a change in the sociolinguistic situation. "If it does", he ruminates, "an entirely new situation will arise, and there will be plenty of time to examine it" (57).

It is reasonable to assert that Achebe does not foresee any future change in the situation, hence his subsequent consolidation of his use of English as the language of his creativity.

Other writers have similar views to his. J.P. Clark-Bekederemo, for example, tells us that English language is like a commodity he has bought from a market which is now his indisputable property. Gabriel Okara cherishes the international audience provided to the writer by the language. And the cultural nationalist, Elechi Amadi, defends the use of the language in terms reminiscent of Senghor's lionisation of the French language and the defence made by the apologists of the use of foreign languages in England and France when English and French were at the point of extinction as valid vehicles of cultural expression in their countries. As he formulates it,

What all this comes to is that English is a highly effective and efficient language which conveys our thoughts better than our indigenous languages. We should swallow our pride and strive for high competence in it (17).

Literature in English is now developing rapidly in Nigeria. Two important national bodies – Liquefied National Gas (LNG) and Association of National Authors (ANA) – regularly organise financially rich national awards in the various genres to promote excellence in the art of writing. The exercise has been very useful to the growth of the literature because it has helped to check the excesses of some young writers who fervently yearn to be Soyinkas, Achebes or

Amadis without submitting themselves to the ritual of virtual self-immolation necessary for choosing the right word during the creative process. They hardly feel the pains of the ordeal expressed by Gustave Flaubert, a nineteenth-century French novelist, who once felt the anguish of working on a paragraph for three weeks without being near to finishing it.

The literature has attracted an enviable international recognition. Such writers as Achebe, Osundare, Emecheta, Okpewho, Omotoso, Ojaide, Okri and Adichie even reside abroad and gain accolades for their competence in writing. Of particular mention are the awards given to Soyinka (Nobel Prize), Achebe (Man Booker International Prize), Okri (Booker Prize) and Chimamanda Adichie (The Orange Broadband Prize for Fiction).

Unfortunately, these successes tend to register the point that the literature forms part and parcel of the world literature in English energised by the English literary tradition of the metropolis. The international awards are based in Europe; the winners of the prizes are resident in the host countries from where they champion their mission of promoting the growth of the English language and even helping to develop the cultural values of their host communities whose sensibilities they help to prune in their works; and the well-financed publishing houses (e.g. Routledge, Currey and various University presses) operate from abroad and help establish the taste used in assessing the works. It is not surprising that the criteria for judging the texts are shaped by European critical tradition. Most of the established Nigerian critics are now abroad, having been chased out of the country by the hostile intellectual life asphyxiating creativity in the land: Abiola Irele, Emmanuel Obiechina (who has just left for the

world beyond), Biodun Jeyifo, Isidore Okpewho, Ernest Emenyonu, Chukwuma Azuonye, to mention but a few, practise their literary theory and criticism from intellectual centres far away from home. Along with their counterparts in the various Nigerian departments of English, they basically use concepts developed by European scholars in assessing the works; thus such diverse movements as Classicism (rooted in Aristotle's **Poetics**), Romanticism, Symbolism, Realism, Marxism, Myth Criticism, Psychoanalytical approach to criticism, Structuralism, Post-structuralism, Modernism, Post-modernism, Reception theories, Post-colonial aesthetics and Feminism shape the ideas used in their critical discourse. In a way, therefore, Nigerian Departments of English are bastions of European cultural imperialism where foreign values are used to interpret literary texts. Attempts are hardly done by them (as most writers themselves do) to quarry the mines of traditional Nigerian societies for aesthetic values pertinent to their critical enterprise.

The hope that English in Nigeria is in the process of naturalising itself to the status of becoming a full-fledged mother tongue in Nigeria as expressed by some well-informed Nigerian scholars in Applied English Linguistics, constitutes a source of worry to many cultural nationalists who believe that it is not ideal to allow a foreign language inherited through colonialism to grow to such a status and possibly carry the weight of the country's national literature while leaving the indigenous languages spoken by most Nigerians, as many linguists repeatedly assert, to fade into oblivion.

Literature in French

On 14 December 1996 the late President Sani Abacha proclaimed a law which expunged the Nigerian languages from the linguistic space of Nigeria. By a military fiat Nigeria had become a **bilingual state**, a situation that was grossly incompatible with the incisive scholarly findings of many a linguist on the **multilingual** status of Nigeria. A cultural agreement was signed between Nigeria and France in which it was agreed that Nigeria would promote the teaching of French in Nigerian schools but there was no corresponding obligation from France to teach a Nigerian language or languages in French schools. The inferiority complex wrongly fixated into the mindsets of the citizenry through slavery and colonialism reared its head again, for it would be unreasonable to believe that Nigeria would become a Francophone country at the expense of the growth and development of Nigerian languages. Surely, it is imperative that French be studied as a very important **foreign language** in the country but not as a **lingua franca**. Nevertheless, it is yet to be fully implemented, "probably because Nigeria is multilingual and not bilingual" (Maduka "The Clouds ..." 13).

However, it is important to note that a thriving Francophone literature exists in the country. Only the enterprising if precocious Nigerian scholars working on French language and Francophone literatures of the world are in a position to discuss it since it is not written in English and cannot be studied within the literary history of Anglophone Africa.

The works of Anthony O. Biakolo, Adiyi Bestman (Prof. Martin Bestman of the University of Port Harcourt) and

Ramonu Sanusi come readily to mind. Biakolo's **L'étonnante enfance d'Inota (Inota's Amazing Childhood)** is a narrative exploring the conflicts engulfing the Urhobo and the Itsekiri, two ethnic groups from the Niger Delta. Adiyi Martin Bestman's **Unealebasse d'aubes (A Pot of Dawns)** is a volume of poetry very rich in imagery and evoking moods of private life and disenchantment with the socio-political neglect of the Niger Delta by the Federal Government. And Ramonu Sanusi's three texts touch on various genres. **Mama Tutù et Cris Nègres (Mama Tutu and Nigger Screams)** contains two texts: one a narrative and the other a collection of poems. **Mama Tutu** is a narrative drawing its force from the Yoruba oral tradition and **Cris Nègres** a representation of various moods energised by angst over personal life, racial maltreatment of Blacks and various social ills in the country including lamentations on womanhood. **Le bistouri des larmes (The Knife of Tears)** is a political novel decrying the shortcomings of a military junta in the fictional country Nigara (which is obviously Nigeria). And **Septième Printemps/Seventh Springtime** is a collection of poems written in both English and French evoking the persona's nostalgic feelings of happy childhood. Sanusi is therefore a prolific writer with a great concern for the vanishing traditional values in the land and the necessity of social justice in the mode of governance.

The literature in French reveals the amazing degree of competence in the language by the Nigerian scholars specialising in Francophone studies and teaching in the tertiary institutions of the country. Although it buttresses the law elevating French to the status of a lingua franca in Nigeria, it dramatises the confusion raging in the literary

sector of the economy for it is a literature without a valid audience. The Francophone scholars in the field hardly recognise their existence in their publications because of their inability to locate the literary tradition to which it belongs – it neither shares in the tradition of the Francophone African literature nor has the capacity to operate as a tradition distinct in itself.

Literature in Nigerian Languages

As has earlier been argued, globalisation has imposed on Nigeria/Africa serious economic, political and cultural constraints which make it very difficult for the country/continent to operate with effective freedom. But this handicap cannot explain away the **laissez-faire** attitude of the various governments of the Federation towards the use of the Nigerian languages and literatures for national development, for this attitude tends to validate the widespread prejudice of the West and the East towards Blacks who are perceived as inferior people incapable of ruling.

The issues of slavery, colonialism and neocolonialism should not be used to account for the inaction of the governments. As I have argued in “The Clouds Are Thickening: Nigerian Languages and Literatures in National Development” various countries of the world have passed through a similar colonial experience but have recovered from the trauma. The English, the French, the Finns, the Luxembourgers and more recently the Welsh and the Vietnamese have all reversed the fortunes imposed on them by hostile historical experiences. Even France recently imposed laws on its media to help protect the integrity of the French language in the face of the contemporary threat from

the international spread of English through globalisation. It is therefore imperative for the country to recognise the fact that "... the renaissance of African cultures [should not lie] in the languages of Europe" (wa Thiong'o 5). The patriotic views of the Nigerian linguists expressed through their publications and various communiqués from their previous national conferences of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria should now provide a plan of action for the national emergency that should be declared on the situation.

Two points have to be reiterated:

1. The present language policy of the government ought to be reversed because it works against "the integration of the masses (constituting over 80% of the total population) with the elites across the ethnic groups" (Maduka, "Beyond Ethnicity ..." 57). Ayo Banjo, in fact, has articulated the point clearly:

The case for English has always been overstated. It is true that English language in Nigeria is a common language, but only for the educated class. Perhaps as many as 90% of our people in both the urban and rural areas are untouched by its alleged communicative role. ("On Citizenship ..." 97).

The statistics for French can better be imagined than described.

It is necessary, therefore, to adopt Bamgbose's view that the policy of horizontal integration of the populace which stresses the use of a European language be dropped in favour of that of vertical integration which focuses on "the adoption of one or more indigenous languages". (Bamgbose 22).

2. The drama of the multiplicity of the Nigerian languages should no longer be overplayed because a government with a vision and will can get the problem easily solved. The social scientists have indeed been arguing over the two major strategies for overcoming the predicament: deployment of state power to eliminate ethnicity or use of diplomatic means to achieve the purpose. Eghosa Osaghae, for instance, elucidates the second option in this way:

Nigeria's large number of ethnic groups, inequalities among them in size, resource endowment, education and access of state power and resources, her highly developed and factionalised bourgeoisie, make her ethnic situation perhaps the most complicated in Africa (29).

Programme of Action

First, it is necessary to declare a state of cultural emergency in the country. Every Nigerian should know how to read and write in his/her mother tongue. In the process some literature should be learnt because the knowledge of the subject enhances the prospects of one's mastery of the language.

Second, the pursuit of the learning of the French language by Nigerians should be restricted to organising well-financed crash programmes for officials or individuals engaged in activities related to the people from Francophone ECOWAS.

Third, the *Cultural Policy for Nigeria* has to be reformulated and vigorously implemented. The preamble of the 1988 brochure rightly states that,

A cultural policy is imperative in order to incorporate such an essential part of our history into our general national development process because culture as a force has both its own economic and political consequences in the life of any nation (22, p. 5).

But the document seems unaware of the role of literature in the life of a nation, especially that in an indigenous language. One has to remember that literature aesthetically celebrates the importance of order in the self, one's relationship with other citizens and the functioning of social institutions. Its importance in the national life of the people should be properly dramatised.

Fourth, it is ideal to reintegrate language and literature in WAEC, NECO, JAMB or other relevant exams in indigenous languages and literatures so that students taking them will fully benefit from the values emanating from the inseparable bond between the two disciplines.

Fifth, Departments of Linguistics and Communication Studies in Nigerian universities should be vigilant over the proper inclusion of adequate number of courses dealing with literatures in Nigerian languages. There is the tendency to crowd them out of the programmes.

Sixth, the curriculum of the Departments of English in Nigerian Universities should be decolonised such that every lecturer and student in the departments should know how to read and write in the mother tongue. Each student should at least take two semester courses in a literature written in a Nigerian language and every lecturer should be advised to show interest in interpreting literatures written in Nigerian languages and this with the critical terms developed in the

languages. Courses in oral literature should no longer be taught as museum pieces which have no relevance to the national development of the country.

Seventh, it is necessary to encourage the teaching of Comparative Literature across the boundaries of Nigerian languages in order to help champion the cause of national integration of the peoples of Nigeria.

Conclusion

The values incarnated in the courses dealing with Nigerian languages and literatures should be drummed into the ears of the Nigerian citizenry and especially the Federal and State governments so that the impending tragedy of allowing globalisation to totally wipe out their existence in the cultural life of the nation will be averted. It is important to remember in particular that literature celebrates the importance of order in individuals, interpersonal relationships and the functioning of social institutions. I hope that the communiqué emanating from this conference will succeed in helping the nation to cultivate the proper values necessary for its survival as a country.

Thank you for your patience.

Note

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21. Orthography, globalisation and IT: A proposal for Ibibio text technology

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Language, being dynamic, changes over a period of time; such changes are not necessarily conscious and planned. But the orthography of a language is notoriously static and does not change in keeping with phonological language change: speech is transient, and a function of time, while writing, as a storage strategy, is space-bound. In consequence, orthographies are often obsolete in comparison with the spoken form of language, unless deliberate revisions are made for educational, political or economic reasons. In this paper, we look at the often startling changes brought about by the Information and Communication Technologies and the need for a more pliant approach to orthography in order to cope with the changing times.

1. The Typology of Orthographies

Language development is an important issue that is of major interest and concern to linguists, educationists and planners. This is more particularly acute in Nigeria, where many of the indigenous languages do not qualify to be considered

developed by standard language developmental indices. It is therefore neither a surprise nor a coincidence that the theme of this symposium is “Developing Nigerian languages in the 21st century’. It is within this context that we discuss the issue of orthography, a crucial tool in language development, and how it can be better harnessed for better language development in the 21st century, especially for Nigerian languages.

Human language is primarily used in speech form but over the years humans have attempted to find more enduring devices to communicate and transmit and share information to and with others, ultimately giving birth to the early forms of writing/inscriptions. Sampson (1985) discusses the typology of a wide range of orthographies and proto-orthographies. Modifying his definitions slightly for brevity, we distinguish the following main types:

Semasiographic: writing systems in which a near one-to-one relation, often iconic, holds between meaning and symbol (cf. road signs, icons in computer graphical user interfaces, Arabic numbers).

Glottographic: writing systems in which a near one-to-one relation between type of linguistic unit and symbol (typically, standard orthographies of all kinds).

Glottographic writing systems fall into two main classes, according to the *double articulation* principle of language:

Logographic: meaning-bearing units, either *polymorphemic* (word) or *monomorphemic*; (cf. Chinese orthography).

Phonographic: meaning-distinguishing units, either *syllabic* (cf. Linear B, Japanese), *segmental* (cf. Latin, Greek, Cyrillic), or *featural* (cf. Korean Hangul).

Orthographies as we know them are glottographic, and probably the majority of orthographies currently in use are phonographic. It could be argued that there are intrinsic connections between orthographic type and language type. For instance, languages like English with complex syllable structures (at least CCCVVCC, as in *strives* /straivz/) and therefore potentially large syllable inventories may be best served with a segmental phonographic orthography. Languages with CV or CCV syllable structures, such as Italian, Japanese, and as many of the Kwa languages, and therefore potentially quite small syllable inventories, may be best served in principle by a segmental syllabic orthography. Ibibio has a syllable structure of intermediate complexity.

1.1 Contextual Constraints on Orthographies

Sociolinguistic issues of language contact and intercultural influence have led to a situation where orthography and language typology are relatively independent, sometimes with different orthographies being used for what is practically the same language (e.g. Urdu and Hindi, or Serbian and Croatian, or the multiple orthographic systems of Japanese). The same applies to language change, in which pronunciation can change relatively rapidly, but institutionalised codes such as orthography remain more or less static (e.g. English, with its notorious *bough*, *cough*, *through*, *though* alternations, or French *eaux* /o/ 'waters'). We will call this set of conditions on orthography its *Historical Constraint* system.

A second important principle in orthographic typology we will call the *Media Constraint* system of an orthography. The earliest known forms of visual communication are found rock paintings; later, clay tablets with semasiographic inscriptions were used for record-keeping and archiving, later developing into logographic and, with the need for representing meaningless proper names, into phonographic systems. The Media Constraint is still valid: with the advent of printing, forms of writing were modified, simplified, stylised and standardised, and with the advent of the speech and text technologies further constraints led to simplifications such as the 128 ASCII codes for the 26 core Latin letters, numbers, some punctuation marks and a number of typewriter layout codes. Recent years have seen the advent of the Unicode initiative, with the goal of encoding all the existing writing systems of the world; most modern software (as of 2004) is Unicode based, but from the point of view of a language like Ibibio the practicality of Unicode is limited to high-tech printing applications in the professional IT domain, while more everyday "typewriter-like" applications pose different media constraints.

Linguists have traditionally seen spoken language as phylogenetically, ontogenetically and semiotically primary. Bearing in mind both the Historical Constraint and the Media Constraint, this view has considerable justification. But sometimes the idea of the supremacy of spoken language over the written medium has been overdone. We consider it uncontroversial that written language arose with the development of hierarchically complex social organisation and division of labour in towns, cities and government hierarchies, and that complex social and religious

organisations of these kinds are inconceivable without a highly developed orthography. Consequently, in these contexts each orthography has a primacy which we refer to as its *Functional Constraint* system (cf. also Crystal 1993).

We put forward the thesis that in the global information and communication society, when it comes to developing new orthographies the Historical Constraint, Media Constraint and Functional Constraint systems combine to push orthography in the direction of a single, relatively homogeneous type of writing system of the *segmental phonographic glottographic* type. We do not advocate this, as it may easily lead to the undervaluing of a culturally significant heritage in the case of established orthographies. But we describe it.

1.2 Linguistic Properties of Orthographies

In order to understand orthography we regard it as a semiotic system in its own right, and advocate a triadic view of the sign, related to the views of Peirce and Jespersen, as opposed to the classic Saussurean dyadic view. In the triadic model, a sign has three components:

1. *meaning* - in the case of orthography the unit of language, such as the morpheme or phoneme which a unit of writing represents, e.g. in English /p/ as the meaning of *p*, with semantic notions such as ambiguity associated with units like *c* - cf. *chic, chicken, can, cell*.
2. *structure* - the 'grammar' of writing, such as the combination of *characters* (elements of an *alphabet*) into *graphemes*; e.g. in English *ck*, as well as its synonyms *c* and *k*, each of which is dependent on its immediate context,

including discontinuous graphemes such as *a-e* vs. *a* as in 'mate' vs. 'mat'. Note that in the context of the semiotics of orthography characters are to graphemes roughly what phonemes are to morphemes, in that they have a distinctive rather than meaning-bearing function (where 'meaning' in the context of orthography means some linguistic unit, as already introduced). Of course, in the larger context of language, segmental phonographic graphemes themselves have a phoneme-like distinctive function.

3. *realisation* - the 'graphology', 'graphemics' or 'orthographics' of writing, i.e. the representation of characters by *glyphs* of different shapes and properties, such as upper and lower case, italic and roman, printed or handwritten, in different horizontal or vertical orderings.

Each writing system is characterised in these terms by its own specific *Semiotic Constraint* system. Thus, English and American orthographies use the same alphabet, but have somewhat different meanings (i.e. pronunciation), different structure (cf. *armor*, *armour*) but in general the same realisation as glyphs.

1.3 The Use of Orthographies

Orthography is an institutionalised formal system of visual representation for utterances of a language, comprising the alphabet plus other spelling rules and conventions which were systematically introduced above. Williamson (1984:7) identifies five principles of a good orthography which in our interpretation spell out various basic constraints. The

principles are:

1. *Accuracy* (in relation to the Semiotic Constraint system, particularly the meaning);
2. *Consistency* (in relation to the Semiotic Constraint system, particularly the structure);
3. *Convenience* (in relation to the Semiotic Constraint system, particularly the realisation, also bearing in mind the Media Constraint and the Functional Constraint systems);
4. *Harmonisation* (in relation to the Historical and Functional Constraint systems), and
5. *Familiarity* (in relation to the Historical Constraint and cultural heritage).

Given the variability of human language, it is not always possible to find a standard orthography with all these criteria harnessed effectively. There is often the necessity for some balancing acts to take care of certain language specific or general constraints, with the result that some principles are given less consideration than others. An orthography may be *over-constrained* in terms of its constraint systems, in the sense that it becomes ineffective in meeting contemporary or current writing needs of the language.

The most obvious form of over-constraint is when pronunciation, and thus the meaning of an orthography, changes drastically, and consequently a call for orthographic reform is heard, competing with calls for retaining orthography as part of cultural heritage, pointing out that a generation or two later it will become difficult or impossible to read older literature. Two well-known cases in the 20th century were the orthographic reforms of Dutch and German,

each of which was predictably accompanied by massive controversy. In general, 'reform' means 'phonemicisation', i.e. the attempt to establish a one-to-one semantics for graphemes, and a reduction in the size of the grapheme inventory and the alphabet of characters.

English orthography is notoriously over-constrained; witness G.B. Shaw's mockery of English spelling with the word 'ghoti', which he claimed yielded 'fish', provided orthographic structural context is ignored - 'gh' as the /f/ in 'cough', 'o' as the /ɪ/ in 'women', 'ti' as the /ʃ/ in 'nation'! But attempts to reform, i.e. phonemicise, English orthography have failed, mainly on the grounds of Williamson's Harmonisation Principle: the meanings of English graphemes are, in many cases, *morphophonemes* rather than *phonemes* (cf. the orthographic plural *s*) and often correspond to states of the language which are shared by divergent modern varieties which differ considerably in their phonemic systems. Consequently, a phonemicisation of the orthography would inevitably benefit one variety at the expense of others, leading to a rejection of attempts at reform.

2. Globalisation

The concept of globalisation has been introduced to cover the post-colonial spread of political, industrial, economic and military standardisation throughout the world. Globalisation has brought with it new challenges in all spheres of human life and endeavour, both in the positive sense of improving the material state of communities and in the negative senses of loss of traditional heritage and polarisation of the distribution of wealth. Globalisation is closely linked with concepts such as Information Technology, the Information Society, the

Knowledge Society, and the Information Technology Age. As a consequence, it has become increasingly necessary to create or modify new or old products to be compliant with new global specifications, such that they should be easily accessible to other members of the global village. Products, as we use the term here, are not restricted to factory-manufactured goods, but extend to include intellectual and cultural products, such as languages, language tools, and services. For this to be viable, such products must have some element of uniformity that will make them easily interchangeable or readable by other global citizens. Products need to conform to standards that are globally defined for easy processing and uniform assessment and evaluation. This will ease storage, access and retrieval procedures.

Fortunately for traditional heritage there are counter-tendencies. Superficially, one counter-tendency is *localisation*, i.e. the adaptation of products to local and regional requirements, motivated by local and regional market forces. At another level, there are strong movements which aim to document local languages and cultures before they are overrun by global languages and cultures. These counter-tendencies are but a drop in the ocean in regard to the diversity of human languages and cultures, however, and are often regarded as barriers to a just distribution of resources and wealth, and indeed to human equality itself. Again, we are not advocating globalisation as such, but describing it.

2.1 Orthographic Globalisation

The 20th century has seen an enormous increase in the number of languages for which orthographies have been developed. These orthographies have become a double-edged

sword, mainly because they have introduced an explicit *Linguistic Constraint* system in place of the functional constraint systems which we have already characterised. The Linguistic Constraint system has often led to so-called 'colonial missionary orthographies', which were not developed by the owners and have the following properties:

1. Based on the phonographic principle of *segmental* representation without regard for the typology of the language.
2. Based on the segmental principle of *phonemic* meanings for graphemes without regard for the utility of *morphophonemic* meanings for graphemes.
3. Based on a very local notion of *language* without regard to historical similarity or mutual intelligibility.
4. Based on the adoption of characters and diacritics from the *International Phonetic Alphabet* (IPA) without regard for convenience of use in handwriting, typewriting or word processing.
5. Based on the principle of *unambiguous* representation, including relatively full representation of lexical and grammatical tone, without regard for the relatively unproblematic existence, and possible advantages, of ambiguity in traditional orthographies.

These principles have led to an increase in cross-linguistic efficiency of orthography development, particularly in regard to economical alphabetic coding, but have had indisputable negative side-effects such as the creation of artificial barriers between rather similar dialects. Often these differences are compounded by different colonial traditions. Compare the

French and English influenced orthographies of 'Kouadio' and 'Kwajo' or 'Kojo' for a well-known Kwa name, 'Agni' and 'Anyi' for a well-known Kwa language, 'Dioula' and 'Jula' for a well-known Mande language. The use of non-roman IPA glyphs has led to a grossly over-constrained situation for many languages in terms of the Media Constraint system, in that rather high-tech equipment (or handwriting) is required for producing them, while the practicalities of the situation do not generally permit this.

Once again, we do not pass judgment or maintain that there are mainly disadvantages or advantages; we describe. In practical contexts, inevitably compromises are necessary.

3. Information Technology

Digital processing and distribution of information via the use and manipulation of computers, electronics and telecommunication is known as Information Technology, sometimes Information and Communication Technology, popularly known as IT or ICT, whose Media Constraint system developed along the following scale:

1. *morse telegraphy* (a relatively straightforward digital encoding of a given alphabet and punctuation, but with no formatting);
2. *teletype* (a numerical encoding of upper or lower case letters and a few punctuation and formatting codes, with standard typewriter glyph and function realisations);
3. *computer terminals* (e.g. so-called VT100 terminals, with 128 ASCII - later 256 extended ASCII - codes for Latin

alphabetic, numeric, punctuation and formatting codes with standard typewriter-oriented glyph and function realisations);

4. *modern word processing systems* with potentially unlimited substitutable code pages and fonts (with well-known drawbacks of fonts being frequent unavailability and yielding strange characters on screen and paper), and
5. *the universal Unicode character definition system* (intended to overcome the drawbacks of earlier code page and font combinations).

As a result of the advances made in IT, it has become increasingly necessary and mandatory for language tools, such as orthographies, storage and archival systems, to exist in forms that can position languages to fully tap into the benefits of IT, especially in resource sharing, language planning and the various aspects of language development, including documentation, description, dictionary-making, orthography development, speech synthesis, etc. (Gibbon, Ahoua, Urua, Gbery, Ekpenyong 2004). Neglecting this process can lead to a language being doubly disadvantaged in this IT and globalisation age, in that it can tap neither into the benefits of globalisation nor conserve its heritage.

4. The Ibibio Language Orthography

The Ibibio language orthography (Essien 1983 ed.) approved for use in schools in 1985, was the first Nigerian language orthography produced solely by the language owners. There are many positive features of this orthography. First and

foremost, it adhered closely to some of the Principles set out in Williamson (1984). The Principles of Accuracy and Consistency are cases in point, where symbols are expected to agree with the sound system of the language and the same symbol used for the same sound everywhere the sound occurs. The result is an orthography that is more or less phonemic, which has the advantage of making reading Ibibio easy to people to whom Ibibio is their mother tongue. The Essien orthographic system is shown in Appendix 1 (cf. Essien 1983 ed.:7-8).

However, as we pointed out earlier, it is often difficult to balance the equation perfectly, given other competing constraints in orthography development, and compromises are inevitable. Because the very important Principles of Accuracy and Consistency were adhered to very strictly with respect to the phonemic segmental phonographic type of orthography, there is a clash with the other Principles, specifically those of Familiarity and Convenience. Recall that in the Ibibio-speaking part of Nigeria, Akwa Ibom State, people were already familiar with the Efik language orthography because that was the ‘unofficial’ lingua franca for these parts for various historical reasons. In view of the similarity of Efik and Ibibio, and their joint classification as Ibibiod (Essien 1990), a different, integrative strategy based on the Historical Constraint system and morphophonemic orthography semantics might have been considered. Related issues in connection with the transcription of English with IPA symbols have been discussed from time to time (cf. Windsor Lewis 2003). Some of the Ibibio vowel symbols, namely <ɒ> and <ə> in words such as **fɒk** ‘cover’ and **nɒk** ‘push’ are rather exotic in relation to familiar orthographies, and are still unfamiliar and inconvenient to use in an IT context (or even

with typewriters), with the result that even the teachers who are expected to teach the new orthography to learners have difficulty in using the symbols and consequently in teaching them. One could turn the argument on its head and argue that the problem of unfamiliarity can be resolved when people simply learn to use it and thereby become familiar with it. The truth is that twenty years after the publication of the standard for Ibibio language orthography, teachers and speakers are still unfamiliar with these vowel symbols, and the writing of Ibibio is made more difficult than it need be.

There are several difficulties with the phonetic symbols <ɒ> and <ə>, some of which are representational:

1. The problem of representing these symbols with either an ordinary typewriter or modern computer. The characters are not found in regular typewriters or computers, for that matter, though of course recently more high-tech systems can represent such characters. Special type characters have to be used and in the case of computers, special proprietary fonts are needed (SIL IPA, etc.).
2. A related problem with the two letters is their capitalisation. It is not easy to just routinely capitalise them like the other letters of the Ibibio alphabet, a different type of symbols have to be looked for, particularly for the schwa. It is probably easier to invert the capital letters for E and V in printing and in hand written documents but in typing, whether with a manual typewriter or with a computer, a different set of keys or characters are again required. Even with the use of special fonts, one needs to resort to increasing the size of the special fonts to capitalise

the <Λ>. The world has changed to a situation where word-processed documents are the norm rather than the exception.

3. Tone marking in texts is another area that could be problematic. Fortunately, although the Ibibio orthography identifies tones and suggests how they should be marked, the developers go on say that "... panel was however, of the view that in ordinary prose writings, tones need not be indicated." In some developing IT contexts, such as the use of text-to-speech (TTS) systems for public announcements and telephone information systems, tone needs to be re-constructed from a computational dictionary and a computational grammar, however. This is of course a different Media Constraint from the use of orthography for reading rather than TTS.

Modern day orthographic problems must take into account critical global issues, such as IT. More importantly, orthographies must be designed to be computationally friendly in order to make the development of such languages in keeping with modern day language development facilities. The Ibibio language orthography needs to be revised in line with modern IT requirements, in three respects:

1. It needs to be made easier to use for human users by taking the practical local Functional Constraint system into account.
2. It needs to be made more accessible for simple computational applications which can be readily developed by computational linguists without special

training in font processing.

3. It needs to be automatically convertible into traditional Ibibio orthography, if required, and vice versa, in order to avoid the 'heritage loss' counter-argument noted above, and to acknowledge the Familiarity Principle.

Accordingly, we make the following proposals for a computationally friendly Ibibio language orthography which will meet these three requirements. This will position the Ibibio language to fully tap into the benefits of the IT age.

4.1 Computer-friendly orthography for Ibibio

In developing IT applications, a language needs to be represented in such a way as to permit automatised of many types of analysis which are traditionally performed by linguists. This includes a variety of corpus linguistic techniques (Butler 1992; McEnery & Wilson 1997) such as distributional corpus linguistic analysis of phonotactics, morphology, syntax. This includes the analysis of collocations as they actually occur in real texts, as opposed to what our personal and very complex 'feeling for a language' tells us. For a tone language, this includes the distribution of tones in relation to words (for lexical tone) and in relation to parts of speech (POS), word formation patterns and syntactic constructions (for grammatical tone). The most commonly used methodologies in computational linguistics are the use of so-called 'scripting languages' such as *awk* or *Perl* which are optimised for handling ASCII representations of texts. Advanced coding systems such as Unicode may of course also be given their arcane and non-human-readable ASCII representations, and also processed by these scripting

languages, but human readable 'plain text' or 'typewriter' ASCII is what is meant here. Again, we describe, not judge: Unicode is the method of the future, and will replace present considerations, but only if and when every village is equipped with cheap high-tech word IT systems - but this is not exactly just around the corner.

The main consideration at the present stage of development of IT in Nigeria is to replace the troublesome 'exotic' characters adequately by readily available 'typewriter characters'. For this there are several techniques for defining graphemes on the basis of character combinations:

1. Double characters.
2. Sequential (not superimposed) diacritics.
3. Punctuation marks.

This principle has been used frequently in devising normalised computer-friendly orthographies for speech technology applications in a number of languages. For instance, in the VerbMobil project in the 1990s, the punctuation-mark+character sequence *"a* was used for the non-ASCII character *ä*, the Umlaut or diaeresis diacritic, following conventions already introduced for the LaTeX mathematical typesetting language. For publication, as opposed to computer processing, the sequence *"a* is converted automatically to *ä*. This usage is dying out in Germany because of the 256 character Latin-1 extended ASCII convention, which includes characters like this, and the increasing use of high-tech word processors which use Unicode.

A technique which could be adopted for Ibibio is the use of

a sign such as "=" as a serialised diacritic; this could be economically used, without ambiguity, for nasals, centralised vowels, wedge and schwa, and by using serialised (not superimposed) accent marks for tones:

1. palatal and velar nasals (ny-, ng)
2. double characters for centralised vowels, wedge and schwa:

1. i=
2. o=
3. u=
4. a=
5. e=

3. serialised accent marks for tones, e.g. for TTS applications:

6. 'e (high)
7. `e (low)
8. !e (downstep, a common convention in phonology)
9. `` (rise)
10. `` (fall)

This convention has the advantage of easily permitting upper and lower case if required, for example if more or less standard (but by no means universal) European conventions of capitalising proper names and the beginnings of sentences are to be adopted.

The following short text in two orthographies shows the minimal difference between the Essien orthography and the computer-friendly orthography:

**Excerpt taken from Essien 1983 ed. Orthography (pp. 7-8)
without tones**

Ado anam Ibibio ikiniehe mfina edidiono iko Abasi mbakara
ekadatta edi ke ukan ammo, koro ukp ho ikinekkeke iba ke
ekikere nana Abasi aba ke us n Abasi Ibibio mme ake
mbakara.

Computer Friendly Orthography without tones

Ado anam Ibibio ikiniehe mfi=na edidio=ngo= iko= Abasi
mbakara ekadatta edi ke Ukang ammo=, koro ukpe=ho
ikinekkeke iba ke ekikere nanga Abasi aba ke usa=ng Abasi
Ibibio mme ake mbakara.

Computer Friendly Orthography with tones

‘Ad`o ‘an’am `Ib`ib`io ‘ik’in!ieh’e ‘mf’i=n’a `ed`id`io=ng`o=
‘ik’`o= `Ab`as`i `mb`ak`ar’a ‘ek’ed!att’a ‘ed`i k’e ‘Uk``ang=
`amm’`o=, k’or`o `ukpe=h`o ‘ik’in`ekk’ek’e ‘ib’a k’e ‘ek’ik’er’e
n’ang’a `Ab`as`i ‘ab’a k’e ‘usa=ng ‘Ab`as`i ‘Ib`ib`io `mm`e
‘ak’e `mb`ak`ar’a.

We are working on both a lexical database and a TTS system
for Ibibio, for which this dual function orthography - both
human and machine readable - is being used in two
cooperative research projects, *Abidjan-Bielefeld-Uyo Introduction
to Language Documentation (ABUILD)*, funded by the German

Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and *Local Language Speech Technology Initiative* (LLSTI), funded by Open Echo Ltd., UK. For publication purposes, the modified orthography will be automatically converted, where required, into the traditional orthography.

5. Conclusion

We have contextualised our discussion of Ibibio orthography within a general model of constraints on orthographies in general and principles for the use of orthography. We argued for consideration of the Media Constraint within the context of practical IT in the Ibibio-speaking area of Nigeria, and proposed minor modifications to the established orthography pioneered by Essien and currently used in Ibibio writing in order to facilitate practical computational linguistic and text technological work on Ibibio. We claim that these principles can be applied with considerable advantage to IT development for other Nigerian languages.

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Appendix 1: *Orthographic representation of the Ibibio Alphabet (Essien 1983 ed.:7-8)*

<i>Sounds</i>	<i>Words in which they Appear</i>	<i>in Small Letters</i>	<i>in Capital Letters</i>	<i>Phonemic Representation</i>
a	akpan : ‘first son’	akpan	AKPAN	/akpan/
	b k : ‘tell a story’	b k	B K	/b k/
b	bak : ‘be early’	bak	BAK	/bak/
d	di : ‘come’	di	DI	/di /
e	ebe : ‘husband’	ebe	EBE	/ebe/
f	fat : ‘embrace’	fat	FAT	/fat/
	ti a : ‘kick’	tigha	TIGHA	/ti a/
x	fexe : ‘run’	fehe	FEHE	/fexe/
i	ami : ‘I’	ami	AMI	/ami/
	b t : ‘spread a mat’	bit	BIT	/b t/
k	ko : ‘yonder’	ko	KO	/ko/
kp	kpe : ‘pay’	kpe	KPE	/kpe/
m	ma : ‘like/love’	ma	MA	/ma/
n	nam : ‘do something’	nam	NAM	/nam/
	Ikpa : ‘spoon’	ikpa	IKPAN	/ikpa /
w	wam : ‘help’	wam	NWAM	/ wam/
	am : ‘sell’	am	NYAM	/ am/
o	bot : ‘create’	bot	BOT	/bot/
	b k : ‘make soup’	b k	BOK	/b k/
	n k : ‘push’	n k	N K	/n k/
p	mboppo : ‘a maiden’	mboppo	MBOPPO	/mboppo/
r	bre : ‘play’	bre	BRE	/bre/
s	se : ‘look at’	se	SE	/se/

t	t : ‘throw at’	t	TO	/t /
	otu : ‘jar’	otu	OTU	/otu/
	ekp : ‘rat’	ekp	EKPU	/ekp /
w	wet : ‘write’	wet	WET	/wet/
y	yet : ‘wash’	yet	YET	/yet/
ai	daiya : ‘sleep’	daiya	DAIYA	/daiya/
ei	kpeiye: ‘beg’	kpeiye	KPEIYE	/kpeiye/
oi	koi : ‘draw water’	koi	KOI	/koi/
i	m iy : ‘be rich	m iy	MOIYO	/m iy /
ui	fuiyo : ‘be lazy’	fuiyo	FUIYO	/fuiyo/

Appendix 11: *Text in the Ibibio Orthography (Essien 1983 ed.:10)*

Ibibio enie uwak ndem. Us k ndem emi ekere Anantia Ibiono, Anyaan Nsit, Awa Itam, Etefia Ikono, Itauma Eket, Ukana Offot, Afia Etoi, Atakpo Uruan, Akpasima Ibesikpo, Itina Iman, Abaam Itak, Udo Oku, Ebom Ukpom. Akpes k odo nte Ibibio eniehe nsio-nsio ndem emi, ammo ediono ke Abasi akponno akan aba. Ammo ekood Abasi adaado Abasi Ibom. Ado anam Ibibio ikiniehe mfina edidiono iko Abasi mbakara ekadatta edi ke ukan ammo, koro ukp ho ikinekkeke iba ke ekikere nana Abasi aba ke us n Abasi Ibibio mme ake mbakara.

This book contains twenty-one (21) papers selected from a pool of fifty-three (53) papers which were received for consideration. Due to space and financial limitations, some other good papers that also address the theme of this book project were dropped. The exercise was painstaking, and the final selection was based on the thorough and objective recommendations of our reviewers.

The majority of the papers that focus on the twin subjects of globalisation and information / communication technologies (ICTs) expressed either fear or optimism regarding their effects on the survival of indigenous cultures, languages and literature. Some of the papers discussed the enormous benefits of ICTs in the study, development, documentation and archiving of indigenous languages of Africa, while others argued that globalisation portends great danger to cultural as well as linguistic diversity. In fact, the greatest worry is that many indigenous languages of Africa may die before the second half of this millennium due mainly to the negative impact of globalisation.

This book is a must read for anyone who is interested to learn more about the role of globalisation in the erosion of cultural as well as linguistic diversity, and the impact of ICTs in the development of indigenous languages in Africa.

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